Ballet TODAY

John Gilpin's caree

Jeanette Minty and John Gilpin of Festival Ballet

Above: Anne Heaton with Donald MacLeary, in A Blue Rose, *and below in* The Burrow, *two of the three new ballets being given at Covent Garden during the current season of the Royal Ballet (formerly Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet)*

Photos: Mike Davis

Ballet TODAY

EDITOR ESTELLE HERF

Cover Portrait

Jeanette Minty and John Gilpin as the Sugar Plum Fairy and the Prince in Festival Ballet's The Nutcracker.

Photo by Mike Davis

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NEXT MONTH'S SPECIAL FEATURES

Dancers of the Royal Ballet. Stories and Pictures

Advice on how to make and take care of your tutu

By Dorothy Watkins
of the Royal Academy of Dancing

Royal Ballet Student

By David Benn

(the first of a series of articles in which the reader is told the true story of the hard road which lies ahead for those who take up ballet as a career).

Part 1: The Audition.

Please make a note of this date

The next issue of BALLET TODAY will be published on 20th February, 1958.

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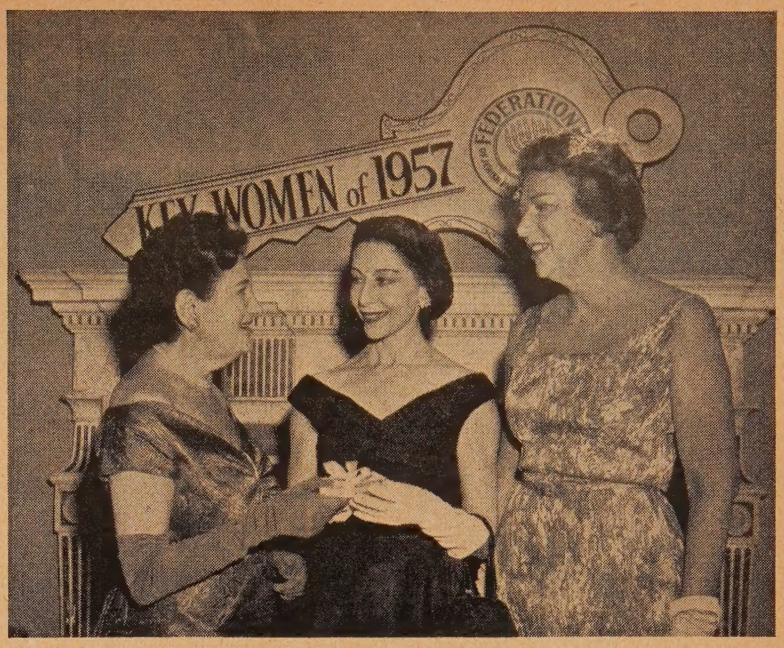
BACK STAGE



ALICIA MARKOVA

In our December issue I reported that Alicia Markova had been named Woman of the Year for her achievements in the field of Art by an American Women's Organisation. Our photograph right shows her at a dinner in New York after the presentation of a Golden Key to mark the occasion with (left) Nettie Rosenstein, designer, who heads the Fashion Division, and another winner (right) Mary G. Roebling who is President and Chairman of the Board of the Trenton Trust Co.

To celebrate Markova's 20th season at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York, the New York Public Library's Music and Dance Section is putting on an Exhibition called "Markova at the Met."

The same rapturous welcome awaited Markova when she opened her present season in New York during December. When this season finishes in January, Markova will return to London to commence rehearsals for her appearance at Drury Lane during late February when she will be Guest Prima Ballerina with the Italian State Opera Company in *William Tell* and *The Pearl Fishers*. The only other time Markova has danced in Opera in London was in 1934, when Sir Thomas Beecham interpolated a special solo for her in *La Cenerentola* choreographed by Ninette de Valois, and performed at Covent Garden.

NEW YEAR HONOURS

In my Editorial column in February, 1957 under the heading *No Honours* I named three people who by their great achievements in their own sphere of art have done so much to foster British prestige at home and abroad. As we go to press it is announced that the first of these three—Alicia Markova—has received the C.B.E. in the New Year's Honours. May it not be too long before the other two—Frederick Ashton and Anton Dolin—receive public recognition of the part they too have played as architects of British ballet.

To Oliver Messel, whose work as designer has won him the award of the C.B.E. we also offer our congratulations.

SUCCESS STORY

One of the nicest gifts I received this Christmas was a book signed on the fly leaf "To Estelle Herf who published my first pictures on ballet, with regards and affection from Mike Davis."

The book, *Mike Davis Looks at Festival Ballet* (reviewed elsewhere in this issue) is the result of four years of hard work, work done after office hours for Mike Davis is not by profession a photographer. Today, however, his work appears in practically every leading magazine at home and abroad, and I am proud to remember that his talent was recognised, and his first commissions obtained, as a result of his pictures published in BALLET TODAY.

BERYL GREY

After a temporary setback due to indisposition, which made it impossible for Beryl to open her season in Moscow as scheduled, she gave her first performance of *Swan Lake* at the Bolshoi Theatre on Sunday, 15th December with Yuri Kondratov as Prince Siegfried and Vladimir Levashev as Rothbart. More than 2,000 people filled the theatre, and after the performance Miss Grey took six curtain calls. After performances in Leningrad and Kiev she will return to London.

MARGOT FONTEYN

One of the first functions Dame Margot will perform on her return from the American and Canadian tour will be the opening of an Art Exhibition organised by The Diplomatist magazine in aid of the International Save the Children Fund. The paintings will be by members of the Diplomatic Corps and many countries will be represented. The opening date will be February 12th and the Exhibition will be at Leighton House, Holland Park, Kensington for three weeks.

NEW CRANKO MUSICAL

John Cranko and John Addison who collaborated in the "Cranks" revue are working together again in *Keep Your Hair On* a full-scale musical comedy to open in the West End early in March following a short tour. Settings and costumes for this production will be by Tony Armstrong-Jones and Desmond Heely, and will incorporate certain types of experimental decor from which it is hoped an entirely new form of stage setting may be evolved. Direction and choreography will be by John Cranko who, in describing this musical, stresses that it is not a second "Cranks" revue but tells a continuous story, highlighting the eternal foibles and paradoxes of human nature.

COSSACKS AT ALBERT HALL

Victor Hochhauser is presenting the Ukrainian State Cossack Company at the Royal Albert Hall, London for a two weeks' season commencing February 19th. The Company will also tour many towns in the British provinces. The Company consists of one hundred dancers and musicians and the repertoire will include both national and ballet dancing. It will be the Company's first visit to this country.

The Royal Albert Hall Charter is such that, unlike London theatres and other concert halls, live public performances are permitted on Sundays, and this will be the first time that such a theatrical company will be allowed to dance in their costumes and make-up on that day. They will give a matinée and evening show each Sunday.

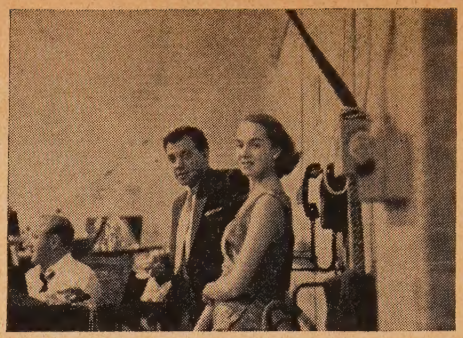
EDINBURGH FESTIVAL

A preliminary announcement of the programme for the twelfth Edinburgh International Festival has already been made. The Festival will take place from August 24th to September 13th, and there will be a season of new ballets by Alan Carter, John Cranko, Walter Gore, Björn Holmgren, Niels Björn Larsen, Kenneth MacMillan, George Skibine, Wendy Toye and others. Among the celebrated dancers who, it is hoped will appear during the season, will be Marjorie Tallchief, George Skibine, Elsa-Marianne von Rosen, Björn Holmgren, Paula Hinton, Kirsten Ralov, Kirsten Simone, Henning Kronstam, Fred Björn Björnson, and Dick Sanders has invited Jean Babilée to appear in his ballet. Choreographers who have also received invitations are Maurice Béjart, and John Taras.

MOBILE BALLET

During the past four years a small group of dancers have been touring throughout England, Scotland and Wales—unheralded and unsung, but giving pleasure to thousands—the Ballets Minerva, which can claim an enviable record of having performed in every county in England, Scotland and Wales. Their record of achievement was crowned recently with a visit to the lovely Casino at Knokke, Belgium, where they were one of the attractions at the Festival Belge D'Eté. The programme consisted of *Swan Lake*, *The Catch* (Alan Carter), *Circe and Ulysses* (a new work specially choreographed for the Company), and Dances from *Prince Igor*. Their reception from a crowded house was enthusiastic and, as a result of this one appearance on the Continent, they have been offered several television dates abroad, as well as a tour of Spain and Portugal.

The success of this company has been largely due to the Artistic Director, Edward Gaillard, an original member of the Old Vic-Sadlers Wells, who formed the Company some four and a half years ago.



Continuing Hope Sheridan's Report on the

ROYAL BALLET SEASON IN NEW YORK

September 11th—**PETROUCHKA (Revival)**

If the original *Petrouchka* was anywhere near as vapid as the product presented on stage under the present title, it is indeed a wonder that it ever survived World War I. Trouble begins the moment the curtain rises to disclose not the goblins and spirit birds of that fantastic Russian night but instead a drop of a carefully detailed scenic view of St. Petersburg. Quite prominent is the staid dome of St. Isaac's under light snow. This drop set the tenor of the ballet and "staid" is indeed the word. Gone is the baleful night and with it every ounce of atmosphere. From that time on nothing, but nothing, happens on stage. With the exception of a tiny bit of character work contributed by Leslie Edwards as a drunken merchant, the fair might very well be a school picnic. As for the main characters, the Showman (Frederick Ashton), the Ballerina (Margot Fonteyn), Petrouchka (Alexander Grant) and the Blackamoor (Peter Clegg), they act as if they had never been formally introduced. How can as biting a comment on life as *Petrouchka* have any meaning if its protagonists do not fully understand and project who they are and what their relationship is to each other? I am as loth to blame the principals for this lack as I am to blame Grigoriev and Tchernicheva who have set the revival. Perhaps, six months of frank speech and exhaustive work between everyone concerned might have produced the hoped for results, but the time was not to be had, the understanding was not forthcoming and the result was a fruitless meeting.

September 17th—**SOLITAIRE**

Set to Malcolm Arnold's Country Dances and dressed piquantly by Desmond Heeley, this ballet was originally created for the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet by Kenneth MacMillan. Like many of the ballets designed for smaller stages, *Solitaire* has taken the transfer but has lost much of its intimacy in the process. We are told it is a "kind of a game for one . . .", devised for five soloists and a corps of twelve. For those in the audience who would identify with its young and wistful heroine, she is poignantly portrayed by Anya Linden, as a child who wants so badly to belong . . . to almost anything, but cannot. *Solitaire* evolves as a series of ensemble dances and solos slightly modern in touch and lightly disguised as children's games played by grown-ups(?) David Blair, Pirmin Trecu and Ronald Hynd add their buoyancy and particular make-believe to the proceedings but it is Maryon Lane who walks off with the honours for an old-fashioned, English Music Hall cake walk that would have stood Lupino Lane proud. All in all, *Solitaire* is quite charming, makes an excellent opening ballet and with one exception, should be used exclusively to show off the younger dancers.

September 18th—**THE PRINCE OF THE PAGODAS**

Ostensibly the first all British, full-length ballet on record, this major work boasts a roster of names that would dazzle even the most blasé. John Cranko created both the scenario and choreography; Benjamin Britten wrote the score; John Piper designed the scenery and Desmond Heeley, the costumes. All have had previous individual successes of no mean proportions, together they should have endowed this work with sheer magic. But instead the witches were at work and with "eye of newt and toe of frog" they willed: the costumes uncommonly ugly, very fussy with perhaps the most unbecoming duck's-back tutu for the heroine I have ever seen; the sets extremely ornate, diverting the attention of the audience from the dance action to the stage action and rather rickety stage action at that; the score totally undanceable, a cacophony of superb orchestral invention which does not contain enough sustained musical line to allow the choreographer development of more than four short variations in the whole of three acts of music. Now add to this brew a still immature choregrapher who falls back on cleverness instead of true invention when in doubt. One night, many years ago, while attending a performance of a similarly moribund work, my grandfather was heard to snort, "this ballet suffers from too much choreography and not enough dancing." There you have *The Prince of the Pagodas*.

Act I provides four original variations for the suitors of the elder daughter. The last variation, for the King of the South, has borrowed handsomely from Katherine Dunham but is most effective. Desmond Doyle, Philip Chatfield, Peter Clegg and Gary Burne are the four kings and do themselves proud. As Princess Belle Epine, Julia Farron proves that an artist can make something out of even the most grotesque and disorganised movements. Act II has a setting very reminiscent of symphonic ballet: sky, water and fire. The heroine almost has no place in Act II nor has the hero, nor, for that matter, have any people even remotely connected with the plot. Most of the act is given over to impressionism. There's a difficult pas de deux for Brian Shaw and Maryon Lane as the Rulers of Fire, also a well done spot for Peter Clegg and Pirmin Trecu as Fishes. Act III is devoted to a series of divertissements à la Petipa among which is a pas de six almost gets things moving but not quite, although well danced by Anya Linden, Merle Park, Maryon Lane, Desmond Doyle, Bryan Ashbridge and Gary Burne. Next comes a difficult but not very rewarding grand pas de deux replete with entrée, adage, two solos and a coda for Svetlana Beriosova as Belle Rose and David Blair as the Prince. It seems to be composed only of arabesques and, although, Miss Beriosova has a lovely arabesque this is not enough from which to fashion an entire pas de deux. Svetlana Beriosova has almost no dancing to show her off but is sublime to look at as the beautiful and mistreated daughter. Leslie Edwards as the Emperor, Pirmin Trecu as the Fool and Ray Powell as the Dwarf try to pull the ballet together. Robert Irving in the orchestra pit turns in a fine reading of this fiendish score. All work hard, but to no avail, Mr. Britten has won and the ballet has lost.

September 26th—**LA PERI**

Frederick Ashton can enter the hall of choreographic immortals on the basis of his pas de deux alone. *La Péri* is eloquent support of this statement for it is nothing more than a sustained pas de deux. But what a pas de deux! Mr. Ashton has chosen to use the scenario Dukas fashioned for his own music. The story tells of the search by the ageing Iskender for the flower by which he might ascend to Immortality. He finds it in the hands of a sleeping Péri. Awakened, she wins it back from him. He falls lifeless while the Péri, holding the magic blossom, ascends toward the light of Ormuzd. The Dukas music is very much in the post-impressionistic school and involves itself in much orchestral meanderings of a neo-oriental cast. However, it is a pleasant score with some lovely passages and of these Mr. Ashton has fashioned several exquisite moments. There is one spot where a superb arabesque is literally grown like a flower out of a series of subtle twistings, turnings, a balance or two. It is moments like these, many of them, as well as some fine solo dancing for Fonteyn which make *La Péri* a delight. I do not find the Indian head movements for Fonteyn charming. Few occidental dancers do them well

Above l. to r.: Annette Page, Pirmin Trecu and Ronald Hynd in the grounds of the Rodin Museum in Philadelphia.
Frederick Ashton, in Hope Sheridan's apartment in New York, searching for new music.
Robert Irving (at piano), Kenneth Alwyn and Mary Drage at rehearsal of Façade.

Continued on page 10

ONE OF THE GREATEST DANCERS IN THE HISTORY OF BALLET

STILL PASSING ON ITS TRADITIONS TO THE YOUNGER GENERATION

TAMARA KARSAVINA

says

MIME IS OF VITAL IMPORTANCE

ANYONE choosing ballet as a career must spend long, patient years to acquire the rudiments of that difficult art. Only when the foundations have been firmly laid in a good school can the second stage—development of character, individuality—safely begin. Initial training provides the solid support which is the only safeguard, that extra "plus" which comes to the performer's rescue in a crisis or whenever a need arises. Without it, the dancer's slender resources are like a house built on sands, rootless, and at the mercy of circumstances.

If this is true as regards the technique of dancing, it is equally true of mime.

We pass through recurrent waves, or phases, in ballet, as in most other forms of entertainment, and the kind of ballet favoured for some time past has been moving away from the stylised classical pattern. Hence there has not been much room for mime of the classical type, and that has led to a widespread belief that mime need not take up so much of a trainee's time as was originally considered essential.

There could be no greater mistake, and the time will inevitably come when dancers who have neglected their mime will find themselves at a considerable disadvantage.

An artist who takes ballet seriously must always look ahead, and try to anticipate any new trends. Already there are signs of a change in taste, and the tendency, as far as I can judge, is towards giving more plot and body to ballet, which means that more acting will almost certainly be called for in the immediate future. Let us make no mistake about this; I think we must regard classical mime as the basis of acting in ballet, even if some parts of it cannot be used in the conventional way that was originally intended.

The art of mime lies in economy of gesture. But every gesture must be expressive. It must convey a definite idea; moreover, it must accomplish that which it sets out to achieve. That is why we are always forced back to the classical model, which has nothing haphazard about it, but is as scientifically thought-out as the technique of ballet itself.

Of course, I must point out that ballets like those of Fokine were already modern in thought, and adapted the traditional mime to their own new outlook and requirements. Fokine's ballets laid the foundation of the form of mime we use today. But this does not mean that we can afford to discard the classical rules in our studies. Only when we have completely mastered these rules are we sufficiently sure of our ground to indulge safely in deviations.

It is a mistake to think that mime can only be used in one way, but a thorough study of the classical technique gives us greater freedom of expression.

I would unhesitatingly recommend this study to all young dancers, for without it, in my opinion, they are bound to be handicapped in their means of "projecting" the character, thoughts and emotions they may be called upon to express.

I should say that this is all the more important for English dancers, because mime in all its implications and scope is not sufficiently known here.

Now, in many Scandinavian countries—Sweden and Denmark, for instance—mime is included in the curriculum as a matter of course; and there the young dancers have the added advantage that they are working in direct continuity with a system that has never been interrupted, building their modern development on the foundation of the old, and losing none of the knowledge that has been patiently built up, generation after generation. I need hardly point out that the strength of the Russian ballet rests largely on the same unbroken tradition.

There is so much more to it than the mere fitting of certain stereotyped gestures to certain ideas. The question of period comes into it; acting in character of the person one represents and so on. You have only to reflect, for a moment, on the effect of fashion on carriage, Our very bodies seem to adapt themselves almost miraculously to every new "line" the fashion dictators impose upon us! When powdered wigs were worn, and wide panniers went with them, women carried their heads very high, and bent their arms at the elbows like stiff little china figurines; when the flat chests of the '20's came into vogue, we developed drooping shoulders and the slumpy movements that went with them. I might go on indefinitely, pointing out different illustrations.

Identifying oneself with any part, one must know something about its entire background—not only the period it belongs to, the correct dress, hair arrangement, accessories, and so on, but even the furniture, architecture, landscape, and the way people behaved in circumstances conditioned by all these things. It is like writing a book—you have to read and absorb far more than you will actually use in the task, but until you are in a position to select and discard, you know that you have not even a bare sufficiency of material.

The study of mime not only helps a dancer to develop a sense of period, but intensifies her powers of selection; and that is the hallmark of the true artist.

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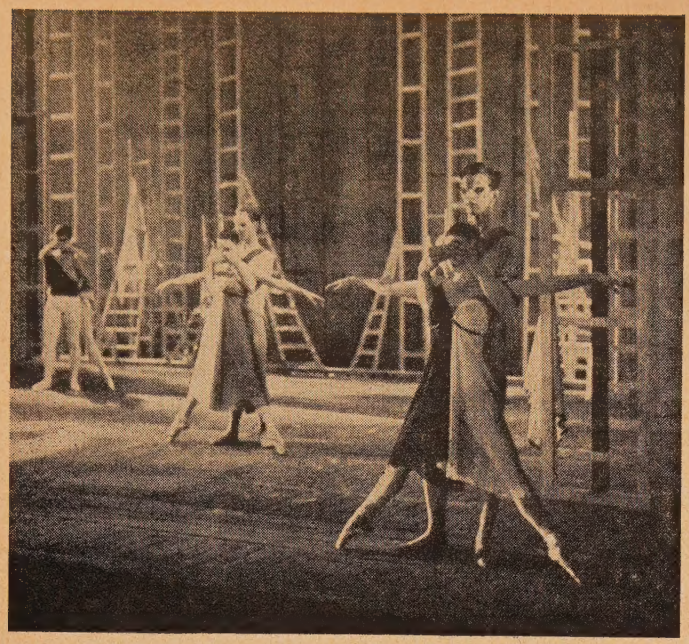
LONDON REVIEWS



The Angels *Photo: Bill Farley*

DANISH PANTOMIME THEATRE
(from Tivoli, Copenhagen)

Princes, 18th December.

These traditional pantomimes differ from the old-fashioned English Christmas show; they are based on naive stories of the Hans Andersen or Grimm Brothers type and use a special kind of mime which has been adapted from the once-universal Italian *commedia del' Arte* mime performance. Four permanent characters—Cassander (the fussy, pompous father-figure); Columbine, his daughter; Pierrot; Harlequin—enact every story, all of which turn on Harlequin's courtship of Columbine, which is disrupted by the father and helped (usually after much interference) by the Pierrot. They are a real kind of folk-art, having been performed in this fixed tradition for centuries in Denmark; but they somehow don't come across very powerfully inside a theatre. The whole method and the kind of stories and people involved are perfect beer-garden humour—jolly, gloriously child-like, terribly obvious in their jokes. The two main items were based on Harlequin appearing as a mechanical statue, and as a skeleton. It is obviously a kind of theatre that matters most to children and an adult could doubly enjoy it if accompanied by someone of a younger generation—who find it all madly funny with people falling down, tripping over things, putting on the wrong coats, etc.

Between the pantomimes was a divertissement of nine items, most of these also in the Tivoli beer-garden style—gay, extrovert, dashing: waltzes, reels, galops, etc., and a very funny, splendidly performed, really good number about the days of early bicycles, with Tutti del Monde and John Wohlk dashing on in a boneshaker and a penny-farthing and doing an amusing flirtation dance.

All was performed with great skill and vigour, and the cast worked hard to put over everything with as much conviction as possible; the two Columbines (Hanne Gemzoe, Else Mende), the two Harlequins (Poul Brockdorff, John Wolhk) and the permanent Pierrot (Carl Johan Hviid) doing everything with all the special skill that their tradition demands.

LONDON'S FESTIVAL BALLET

Festival Hall, 24th December, 1957.

Apparently no other company in Europe has ever before tried to give a complete version of the Petipa-Ivanov-Tchaikovsky *Nutcracker* since its first performance at St. Petersburg in 1892. David Lichine, working closely with Alexandre Benois, has re-choreographed almost the entire work, retaining only parts of the original choreography for the *Grand Pas de Deux*. The decor contains many ideas which Benois certainly wished to see in earlier productions (and omits a few), and in general production style the work carries many of these happy touches of situation and characterisation that Benois (or even some other early collaborator?) first imagined. The result is the most complete "Christmassy" ballet ever seen from an English company and it can now be expected that no London theatrical Christmas will ever be complete without this production.

The full story is told and one of the great merits here is that it is "told" through mime, dance and action, quite complete and perfectly comprehensibly. Clara's Christmas party is packed with incidents of dancing, games, children's fights and squabbles, the parents' splendidly adult "party behaviour"; the Nutcracker's coming-to-life as the leader of the Toy Soldiers, the battle with the Mice, the changing of the Nutcracker into the Prince—all these incidents flow out of the plot and the score with an effortless theatrical logic. The scene-change from the salon to the Land of Snow is a splendid transformation, with the best snowfall ever seen in ballet!

The Kingdom of Sweets scene occupies the second half of the ballet, with all the familiar divertissements arranged in fresh choreography and a Valse des Fleurs full of simple and pretty dance patterns. Various changes of cast involve several Princes, Sugar Plum Fairies and Claras; the first Clara (Mary Hewing) was a natural charmer, acting with grace and perfect conviction her adventures among all the magic. John Gilpin gave a buoyantly lyric rendering of the Prince, Flemming Flindt a gravely heroic version, and newcomer Andre Prokovsky showed his paces in a grand-virtuoso style that promises wonderful things when he is seen in other classical roles.

THE ROYAL BALLET (No. 2)

Covent Garden, 26th December, 1957.

There are no rules for success in ballet; the best talents, working under the happiest conditions, can either achieve it or miss it without anyone ever knowing why the result was what it was. But, obviously, a good subject must be matched with evocative music, sympathetic decor and be encased in interesting choreography—if the whole is to have a chance of being *new*, *different*, or *stimulating* for its audience.

Two new ballets given by this company at its Covent Garden launching were remarkably different and quite remarkably unlike any other ballets in the repertoire; yet neither had enough novelty, suitability of decor or music, or unique choreographic quality to make it even remotely possible to consider it a "success." Peter Wright's *A Blue Rose* is worth a lease of life if it is largely re-choreographed and entirely re-decorated; its choreography (except for one good *pas de deux*) is pale almost to the point of being negative, and the decor is a complete example of what happens when balletic amateurs are permitted to let loose their ideas in a field where great masters of design can easily fail.

The ballet is a linked suite of dances to a Samuel Barber suite (which, incidentally, is supposed to echo the 1914 period—something not even hinted at anywhere in the ballet); a rose is passed from one person to another and supposedly has some subtle influence on each one's reactions to its former owner. This idea means a ballet of highly-charged, emotionally adult, super-sophisticated atmosphere; too much of each scene too closely resembled each other scene and the costumes, in striving for an effect of novel difference, merely managed to look like not-very-clever imitations of the costumes in a dozen earlier ballets of the post-war period.

The Angels, by John Cranko, follows, so far as its idea-content makes sense, his earlier attempts to explain such fundamentals as Man, Woman, God, Love, Sacrifice, etc., etc. It only needs to be said that these sort of profundities can be handled in the Theatre (and very particularly in Ballet) only by a choreographic master whose imagination is of an ecstatic and poetic kind, and whose choreographic invention is boundless and primitively beautiful. Here, the result of an attempt to "explain" the functions of angels in their relationship with mankind, was loaded with a hard-working kind of choreography that gave the dancers a great deal to do which managed to convey almost nothing apart from its tortuousness, its complexity, and its lack of any bearing whatever on the angelic myth. The action received little help from either the score of Richard Arnell or the decor of Desmond Heeley; it was given a nobly effortful performance by all its cast, outstanding among whom were Clover Roope (a dancer with a subtly beautiful lyric style), Donald MacLeary and Donald Britton.

The Burrow Covent Garden, 2nd January, 1958.

This Kenneth Macmillan ballet deals with the reactions of an assorted group of imprisoned people—to one another and to the vague terrors they feel. As subject matter it is legitimate framework for a comment on human behaviour, but one doubts the fitness of the classical ballet mechanism to give moving and comprehensible expression to what the characters are supposed to be undergoing.

The atmosphere is of terror, faint hope, and mutual distrust, mingled with a desperate need to give one another strength. Too much of the movement was naturalistic, not stylised; and a lot of "choreography for choreography's sake"—where a little stasis and silence would have emphasised both characterisation and incident.

The Frank Martin score and Nicholas Georgiadis' decor emphasised the gloomy occasion. Anne Heaton, Edward Miller and Donald Britton gave everything to create impressive characters: but the ballet is a shapeless, not shattering, comment on Man's inhumanity to Man.

* * *

"Veneziana," revived in this programme, will be discussed in a survey of the whole season, in our next issue.

A. V. COTON

Bergenziana

BALLET ON TELEVISION

Granada are to be praised for taking a step forward and presenting some fine artists in their programme entitled *Chelsea at Nine*. Several ballet items have been included. John Gilpin and Dianne Richards, soloists of the Festival Ballet, appeared on December 10th in an excerpt from *Harlequinade*. John Gilpin danced with his usual technical perfection and polish, and Dianne Richards proved a dancer of promise. Her arm movements were soft and flowing and she has a good line, but her facial expression could be more varied.

On December 17th the Royal Danish Ballet was billed to appear. This was rather misleading as only six members of the company performed. As there were no captions for this item, other than the name of the company, the dancers remained anonymous, and it was difficult to catch the important facts about what you were going to see, in one short announcement. The first number was *Bergenziana* with choreography by Fredbjørn Bjørnsson. We were told it was to be an amusing item, "a joke on classical ballet," but I for one was quite unable to see this joke, and found no amusement in what followed. There was an assortment of pas de deux and solo items with an opening and finale by all six dancers. In between these various dances, odd members of the group made curious actions which I presume were supposed to be humorous, but which were quite out of keeping with the rest of the item. By far the best dancing was in the last pas de deux which included an attractive Bolshoi lift. It is possible that the two dancers doing this pas de deux were Henning Kronstam and Kirsten Simone, as later a pas de deux on the lines of *Carnaval* was danced, and these two were announced as the dancers. In this item, Henning Kronstam was dressed as Harlequin, but Kirsten Simone looked as though she was dressed for *La Sylphide*. The only resemblance between Fokine's *Carnaval* as I know it and this one was the opening step for Harlequin; even the music was not the same. This arrangement was beautifully danced by both talented members of this famous company.

Granada showed great enterprise in bringing over these artists; one can only regret that they were not encouraged to present excerpts from the best ballets of the splendid Royal Danish repertoire.

HELEN ROSS.

AUSTRALIAN DANCER'S LONDON DEBUT

At Australia House on Wednesday, November 13th, Miss Eileen Cramer, a dancer well known throughout the dominion for her pioneer work with simple masks which she designs and makes herself (often with material no more substantial than ordinary newspaper) gave her first London recital. Her work is not entirely new to us, as she was seen earlier in the year as guest-star in an important programme presented by Miss Hilde Holger. But it was interesting to get a closer estimate of her experiment with masks.

These proved at times to be somewhat crude, but nevertheless expressive—especially so in a quaint piece entitled "*Peroration*", in which with a wealth of gesture and considerable economy in actual dance-rhythm, she very aptly interpreted an ultra-modern musical fragment by Elizabeth Lutyens, with another Australian dancer, Clare Lancaster, humorously acting the part of a puzzled listener. Miss Lancaster displayed another facet of her gift of humour by her spirited portrayal of a fashion-model showing off "The Sack"; and again humour was emphasised in Miss Cramer's three 'action' studies of familiar folk tunes.

On the whole, however, the serious artistic work was the more impressive. Miss Cramer's own creation, *Dreaming Time Bird*, most gracefully danced by Clare Lancaster, showed real imagination. But perhaps the most pleasing items in this interesting programme were the three dances composed by Madame Gertrude Bodenwieser, the eminent Viennese dancer who has now settled in Australia, and is the leader of the modern dance movement there. Her delicate little masterpiece, *Water Lilies*, in which skilfully fluid arm and hand movements give a perfect illusion of light reflected on placid water, was most sensitively interpreted by Eileen Cramer and an English partner, Judy Bishop. Miss Cramer's *Madonna*, also a Bodenwieser work, has been seen before, and repeated the good impression it made on the earlier occasion. The third item was *Indian Love Song*, in which a modified form of Hindustani dance-technique was skilfully combined with singing, and proved Miss Cramer to possess a very sympathetic vocal talent.

ELISABETHE CORATHIEL

DIARY

FESTIVAL BALLET
ON TOUR

W/c	13th Jan.	*Gaumont, Southampton*
,,	20th	*Odeon Theatre, Leeds*
,,	27th	*De Montfort Hall, Leicester*
,,	3rd Feb.	*Gaumont Theatre, Ipswich*
,,	24th	*Gaiety Theatre, Dublin*
,,	3rd Mar.	*Gaiety Theatre, Dublin*
,,	10th	*Grand Opera House, Belfast*
,,	17th	*Empire Theatre, Liverpool*

THE ROYAL BALLET
(formerly Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet)
AT COVENT GARDEN

15th Jan.	Wed.	(eve)	*A Blue Rose, The Burrow, Pineapple Poll*
17th Jan.	Fri.	(eve)	*Les Sylphides, The Angels, The Burrow, A Blue Rose*
			End of Ballet Season.

ON TOUR

W/c	20th Jan.	*Essoldo Theatre, Brighton*
,,	27th	*Granada, Sutton*
,,	3rd Feb.	*Theatre Royal, Norwich*
,,	10th	*Arts Theatre, Cambridge* (2 weeks)
,,	24th	*Memorial Theatre, Stratford-on-Avon*

THE ROYAL BALLET
(formerly Sadler's Wells Ballet)
AT COVENT GARDEN
Season opens 19th February, 1958.

BALLET RAMBERT
ON TOUR

W/c	13th Jan.	*Theatre Royal, York*
,,	20th Jan.—15th Feb.	*Tour of Scotland*

One week of this tour (Jan. 27th—1st Feb.) will be at the Perth Repertory Theatre.

W/c	17th Feb.	*The Little Theatre, Middlesbrough*
W/c	24th Feb.	*Her Majesty's Theatre, Carlisle* (2 weeks)

THE UKRAINIAN STATE COSSACK COMPANY
AT THE ROYAL ALBERT HALL, LONDON
Two week's season Feb. 19th to March 4th.

A TALK AND DISCUSSION
By Dr. W. G. Raffe

on his series of articles "The Grammar of the Dance"
currently appearing in BALLET TODAY
AT THE LILIAN HARMEL STUDIO
37, Ferncroft Avenue, London, N.W.3.
Sunday, 26th January, at 3.30.
Entrance free—All welcome.

A TALK BY BERYL GREY
On her visit to Russia as guest ballerina
AT THE SWEDENBORG HALL,
Bloomsbury Way, W.C.1.
Thursday, 30th January, at 7.30 p.m.
Tickets from Miss Cowen, 35, Northampton Square, E.C.1.
Admission 2s. 6d. (Members 1s.).

News of Dancers

Left: Christl Zimmerl in Medusa.

Right: Ruth Page. Director of the Chicago Opera Ballet.

VIENNA

The Vienna Staatsoper, for the first time, had a ballet season during November. *Hotel Sacher*, *Nutcracker*, *Don Quixote*, *The Moor of Venice*, *Boutique Fantasque* and the première of *Medusa*, were amongst the ballets given during the season. Christl Zimmerl took the name part in the new ballet *Medusa*, which was well received by the critics.

MONACO **J. R. FARRINGTON**

Rainier III, Sovereign Prince of Monaco, again showed his predilection for Ballet in the programme drawn up for his guests at the Gala Performance in the Monte Carlo Opera on the occasion of the National Fête on November 19th. Of the six items presented no less than five were ballets.

Liane Daydé, Marjorie Tallchief and Claude Bessy danced the items with Renault, Algaroff, Skibine and Bozzoni. Only one première was produced—*Le Bel Indifferent*. Based on a story written by Jean Cocteau in 1940, the ballet portrays the boredom and disillusion of a girl from a café chantant who awaits her lover in a sordid hotel room. The man arrives, tough and indifferent. Refusing to respond to the advances of the girl he callously leaves her in even greater despair. Richard Blareau had composed music which admirably suited the theme. The choreography of Serge Lifar well brought into relief the sensuous grace of Claude Bessy and the restrained harshness of Bozzoni.

Idylle, music by Serette and choreography by Skibine, was the only work not to the choreography of Lifar. Beautifully danced by Tallchief, Skibine and Bozzoni I found this the most satisfying ballet of the evening. *Mephisto Valse*, music by Liszt, was danced by Daydé, Renault and Bozzoni. *Roméo et Juliette*, Tchaikowsky, was danced with delicate pathos by Algaroff and Daydé. Last year we saw this dancer in the same ballet with Vyroubova. *Suite en Blanc*, music by Lalo, closed the performance with six divertissements well suited to the talents of such a distinguished cast.

The Winter Ballet Season in Monte Carlo will be from December 22nd to January 5th. Eugène Grunberg will present programmes by the Paris Opéra Ballet, the Chinese Theatre Ballet and the Spanish Ballet.

CHICAGO **GEORGE JACKSON**

In February, 1956 a new organization, Lyric Theatre, was introduced to the readers of BALLET TODAY. It had just finished its third season in Chicago, the city of its founding, and had already remarkably achieved its ambition of presenting the best in opera and ballet. The dancing and singing wings of the organization profited by their mutual association, often presenting short operas and ballets on the same programme and occasionally joining forces for a masque. In the months following the third season, disagreement arose. Resulting legal action killed Lyric Theatre; its assets went to Miss Fox who the following season founded Lyric Opera; the dancing wing continued under the direction of Ruth Page, but as a separate company called Chicago Opera Ballet.

For the past two years Chicago Opera Ballet has toured the United States with such stars as Alicia Markova, Ruth Ann Koesun, Marjorie Tallchief, Sonia Arova, George Skibine, Oleg Briansky and Job Sanders in ballets by Ruth Page and Skibine. Ironically, the company has not danced in Chicago itself except in the short ballet interludes in some of Lyric's opera productions. The ballet highlight of the 1957 opera season was to have been *Dance of the Hours* in Poncielli's *La Gioconda* but some horrid costumes so hampered the corps that it was impossible to discern Page's choreographic intentions. In the ballerina part Maria Tallchief, guest from the New York City Ballet, alternated with Doreen Tempest, formerly of Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet and a new addition to Chicago Opera Ballet's permanent soloists. Fortunately in suitable costumes, Tallchief displayed her brilliant style and Tempest, although less flashy, proved to be an elegant and gracious dancer. Both ballerinas were partnered by Kenneth Johnson. For the *Judgment of Paris* ballet in Cilea's *Adriana Lecouvreur*, Ruth Page created rhythmically interesting variations for two of her best male dancers, Johnson and Patrick Cummings, respectively Paris and Mercury. Barbara Steele, a strong demi-caractère dancer, was seen to advantage as a gipsy in the first act of Thomas' *Mignon*. For their tour following Lyric Opera's season, Chicago Opera Ballet will be joined by Mia Slavenska as first ballerina.

BROOKLYN

Merce Cunningham presented three New York premières in a programme of dance and music with his Company at the Brooklyn Academy of Music on Saturday, November 30th at 8.30 p.m.

Two "first performances" were among the dances presented: a work for Company, *Labyrinthian Dances*, with music by contemporary Viennese composer, Josef Mathias Hauer, (who discovered a twelve tone method of composition different from and prior to the well known Schoenberg system); a solo, with music by Christian Wolfe, to be performed by Mr. Cunningham.

Also featured on the programme was the first public performance in New York of *Springweather and People*, a dance "which takes place on a large canvas of time with the play of togetherness of people as its dominant characteristic." The music, by American composer Earle Brown, was especially commissioned for this dance, and received its orchestral première at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. (In its published version and to concert audiences, Mr. Brown's score will be known as *Indices*.) A preview of *Springweather and People* was privately presented in New York for the Japan Society in 1955, and subsequently, the work was performed by the Company on tour; on these occasions, a piano reduction of the orchestral score was heard. Mr. Cunningham commissioned artist Bob Rauschenberg to design new costumes and decor for the New York première.

John Cage, Musical Director of the Company, will conduct the eleven piece Orchestra and David Tudor will provide piano accompaniment with Mr. Cage for other works to be presented. Members of Mr. Cunningham's Dance Company include Carolyn Brown (wife of composer Earle Brown), Viola Farber, Marianne Simon, Remy Charlip and Bruce King. Bob Rauschenberg is Artistic Director and Lighting is by Nicola Cernovich.

November 30th marked the fourth appearance of Merce Cunningham and Dance Company at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, and was the sixth appearance for Mr. Cunningham, who on two other occasions presented solo works there. Subsequently, the Company premièred in Boston on December 14th at the John Hancock Hall and in Worcester, Mass., on December 16th, under the auspices of the Clark University.

Around the World

Left: Olga Preobrajenska

Right: Barbara Steele and Kenneth Johnson in Susanna and the Barber

PARIS **FERDINAND REYNA**

PREOBRAJENSKA

ON November 7th, the dance world of Paris paid tribute to Olga Preobrajenska with a Gala under the presidence rd'honneur of Alexandre Benois and Serge Lifar. This soirée took place due to the initiative of a committee set up by Nina Tikanova and Irina Grjebina (at one time pupils of Olga Preobrajenska and now teaching dancing in Paris) and André Schaikewitch the dance writer. The gala was organised and presented by the association known as Danse et Culture which is directed by that courageous critic Jean Dorcy who has to date presented some 400 functions to spread knowledge of the dance not only in Paris but in towns both large and small in France.

When Madame (and Madame in the Paris dance world can only mean Preobrajenska) entered the box of honour garlanded with flowers where Mme. Igorova, Serge Lifar and other dance personalities were awaiting her, the packed theatre rose to its feet and warmly applauded with one accord. Jean Dorcy read out telegrams from the greatest artists throughout the world as their contribution to this act of homage: from the British Royal Academy of Dancing, from the prima ballerina assoluta Margot Fonteyn, from Mme. Karsavina, Alicia Markova, Adeline Genée, Bronislava Nijinska, Felia Doubrovska, Ludmilla Schollar, Vera Nemtchinova, Tamara Toumanova, Nathalie Krassovska, Anton Dolin, Irina Baronova, Pierre Vladimirov, Anatole Oboukhov, Anatole Vilzak and many others.

Jean Dorcy went on to trace out the prodigious career of this artist who was both a marvellous star and a magnificent teacher. In his turn, Serge Lifar, spoke some very moving words to Madame. Then as their contribution to this act of tribute the following artists performed, Marjorie Tallchief, George Skibine, Madeleine Lafon, Youli Algaroff, Olga Stens, Jerome Andrews, Milorad Miskovitch and the very young artists such as J. G. Delrieu, René Blum prize-winner for 1956, and Marie Claire Carrié.

Small and retiring, Olga Preobrajenska was moved to tears as she blew kisses to the audience who acclaimed her affectionately. "I must be dreaming," she said quietly as everyone came to pay their respects to her in the interval.

Olga Preobrajenska will soon be 86 years old. She certainly merited this soirée. Jean Dorcy told in his speech how in the last strike on the metro a month ago, Olga Preobrajenska set out on foot at nine from her home in Passy and crossing Paris, she arrived at 9.30 a.m. at her studio to begin the lesson. A friend took her home by taxi . . .

CHEMIN DE LUMIERE

The Paris Opéra presented on October 30th its first creation of the season. It was only a creation in one sense because this ballet has already been presented some years ago in Munich. The *Chemin de Lumière* is a ballet on a theme by Antoine Goléa, music by Georges Auric, decors and costumes by Cassandre and choreography by Serge Lifar. The principals were the star dancers Peter Van Dijk, Claude Bessy and the premières danseuses Josette Amiel and Claire Motte. The theme is quite nebulous and makes use of old symbols: the vices, sensual love, ideal love, etc. Serge Lifar's choreography is not exactly bad but it is rather uninteresting. The musical score has merit and the dancers were perfect.

DEATH OF JACQUES ROUCHÉ

On November 8th, M. Jacques Rouché died in Paris at the age of 95. Jacques Rouché had a great love of art and literature and at an early age took an interest in the theatre and his musical and choreographic seasons at the Théâtre des Arts between 1910 and 1914 are remembered in the history of the art. When the vogue for the Ballets Russes de Serge de Diaghilev revealed to the west a refined, sumptuous and bold art, Jacques Rouché knew how to make the art of his country benefit from this revival within the framework of its own tradition. He engaged for his theatre musicians such as Florent Schmitt, Albert Roussel, Ravel, etc., and with him true artists produced decors and costumes for his spectacles.

In 1914, Jacques Rouché was nominated a director of the Opéra and he presented in his theatre the great companies of Serge de Diaghilev and Ida Rubinstein, whilst he progressively improved the standing of the Opéra corps de ballet. In 1929, Jacques Rouché began negotiations with Georges Balanchine with a view to having him as permanent choreographer at the Opéra, but Balanchine fell ill. It was Lifar who took his place. The audacity of the young choreographer had stirred up a great deal of hostility, but Lifar backed up by Rouché was able to remain at the Opéra and carry on his work. One could say that Jacques Rouché brought about the revival of ballet at the Opéra. In his time, he saw the appearance of the stars of today who have brought honour to the French stage in recent years. It was Jacques Rouché who instituted Wednesday as ballet night at the Opéra. With him, the last great director at the Opéra has disappeared, a great amateur, mecène and a gentleman in every sense of the word.

NATIONAL BALLET OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Youth, with good humour and great dynamism, these are the principal qualities of the National Ballet of Czechoslovakia which has given a two week season at the Théâtre de l'Etoile. If the Czech performance is less grandiose and sumptuous than that of the Hungarian ensemble for example, the technique of the Czechs is very fine and remarkable. This ensemble carried off several gold and silver medals at the recent Moscow festival. And one can understand why. It is a pleasing spectacle and amongst others two acrobatic items for the men were full of humour and skill.

FRANÇOISE SAGAN

At last we can set our minds at rest! The ballet by the French writer Françoise Sagan, author of *Bonjour Tristesse*, will be presented, in January at the Théâtre des Champs Elysées with a score by the young composer Michel Magne. There is talk of George Skibine as choreographer and of the celebrated painter Bernard Buffet as stage designer. It will consist of a ballet in three acts with 35 artists which will take the whole evening. Classical stars will join with the negroes of Catherine Dunham. All "choreographic specialities" to use a Saganism will be employed and there will be dancing on points . . . and be-bop!

The theme is not very complicated. A young man is waiting for the young girl he loves. She does not turn up and the young man has to content himself with dancing with the flowers, the bottles of champagne and the telephone! Friends drop in on him to try and distract him but it is no use. He tries to commit suicide several times but finds that after all life is good and the ballet is to finish in general gaiety.

The composer Michel Magne, inventor of "Psychological music" who at 16 conducted orchestras in the provinces and who has set many of Françoise Sagan's words to music was to write the score. Michel Magne is also the composer of the *Symphonie Humaine* which caused a stir at the Palais Chaillot in 1955. Public and critics alike asked if this symphony was a farce and if the composer had not been taken too seriously.

HOPE SHERIDAN—(*contd. from page* 4)

and the impression that they give when not done by an expert is that the dancer has a stiff neck. Ashton more than makes up for this flaw by giving Fonteyn the most delectable port de bras I have seen in some time. Michael Somes has no dancing to do but partners sublimely and never breaks the trance-like atmosphere surrounding the entire episode. André Levasseur has costumed both Fonteyn and Somes in striking hues and made the set resemble nothing so much as the deepest recesses of a great weeping willow tree should its limbs turn toward heaven rather than earth.

September 27th—**NOCTAMBULES**

Kenneth MacMillan has chosen for his subject matter the rather interesting hypothesis, "what would happen if a hypnotist turned his powers on his audience?" He does and the results are startling. Nicholas Georgiadis has dressed everyone in a semi-Edwardian mode and set for his characters a decor that is eminently theatrical if deceptively simple. Humphrey Searle's music is disonant and forms a jagged wall against which the characters are briefly silhouetted. There is a slight difference between the programme notes and the stage action. Not exactly everything ends in disillusion, for when the curtain falls the Poor Girl and the Rich Man have somehow found each other despite their differences and we are led to hope that perhaps . . . One of the finest sequences in the ballet occurs when the Soldier, hypnotised, turns his pent-up rage on his fellow man, annihilating everyone. This is a superb moment of anger, admirably danced by Brian Shaw as the Soldier. To Maryon Lane falls the only other rewarding material in the role of the puppet-like assistant, who, at the end, circles the stage, beating a tiny drum like some clock gone mad, while the Hypnotist flees bearing away with him the Faded Beauty. Nadia Nerina turns in a fine performance as the Faded Beauty. It is her lot to dance some very difficult and ugly choreography. Anya Linden and Desmond Doyle are the young lovers and do what they can with trite roles. The corps de ballet is excellent. Leslie Edwards turns in a dramatic performance as the eerie Hypnotist.

Noctambules is a diffuse work simply because there are so many stories going on at once. It holds together because the basic framework is theatrically effective and because MacMillan is a gifted, young man with a real sense of stage dance and crowd movement. When he can overcome the desire to treat his chief characters as victims we shall see some very strong and well developed ballets. Lack of space precludes a complete discussion of the fine work done by so many of the artists but mention can and should be made so . . .

Passing Bouquets to:

Nadia Nerina for a very, very good *Firebird.*

David Blair and Nadia Nerina for their fine replacement work in *Birthday Offering.*

Rosemary Lindsay as the Queen Mother in *Swan Lake.* Also for the Tango in *Façade.*

Peter Clegg as the Blue Skater in *Les Patineurs.*

Franklin White for his Showman in *Petrouchka.* Also for his Kostchei in *The Firebird.*

Merle Park for her fine replacement work in *Birthday Offering.*

Pirmin Trecu, Maryon Lane and Annette Page for the pas de trois, Florestan and his Two Sisters, *Sleeping Beauty.*

Maryon Lane, Annette Page, Brian Shaw for *Swan Lake,* Act I: Pas de Trois.

Mary Drage for her Beautiful Tsarevna in *The Firebird.*

Ray Powell for his gem of a sly and humorous Wolfgang, the Prince's Tutor in *Swan Lake,* Act I.

Julia Farron for practically anything, but particularly, Diana in *Sylvia.*

NEWS OF DANCERS—(*contd.*)

CANADA

Madame Valda, Principal of the Calgary Ballet School in Calgary, Alberta, has sent me the photograph (left), of (l to r) Erik Bruhn, Violette Verdy, herself and Fernand Nault, ballet master of the American Ballet Theatre, taken in Mdme. Valda's studio during a three day visit of the Company during September. Amongst the items given were *Combat, Swan Lake, Graduation Ball, Les Sylphides, Billy the Kid, Interplay,* and *Fall River Legend.*

HOLLAND — **JANET SINCLAIR**

During the past month, the Ballet der Lage Landen have added two new works to the repertoire: *The Magic Bottle* by Denis Carey (Prokofiev/Peter Hoffer), and Walter Gore's *Street Games* (Ibert/Kenneth Rowell). *The Magic Bottle* is only a qualified success, for Mr. Carey has fallen into the choreographer's most fatal trap: the story he has chosen will not translate into movement without the aid of a complicated programme note. Once this, unfortunately, major failing is set aside, the ballet is a continual pleasure to the eye, for the movements of the dancers show Mr. Carey to be that rarity, a choreographer who does not noticeably derive from any other. The costumes and sets are delightful, and the members of the cast perform their tricky movements to the very best of their ability, perhaps the outstanding performances coming from Robert Kaesen and Wim Bender as the Stage Hands.

Street Games also has one major fault, one which seems intrinsic in the work of Walter Gore: it is a little too long. Apart from this it would be hard to criticise the performance adversely in any way. Most of the dancers are chosen from the junior ranks of the company and of the eight involved it would be unfair to the rest to single out one for especial praise. This is undoubtedly Gore's most completely successful production for this company.

Jose Limon has just completed ten days' touring in Holland, where he met disgracefully poor audiences: these, however, made up in enthusiasm for what they lacked in numbers. At one performance in Rotterdam nine-tenths of the audience were personally involved with dance, including Kurt Jooss who had motored over specially from Essen to see the show. Personally I found the style of dancing employed by the members of this group monotonous in the extreme, though in Lucas Hoving the company has a performer of quite outstanding fluidity of movement and nobility of aspect. I don't suppose I shall ever forget the magnificence of his pose as he sits motionless on the stage at one point in *The Moor's Pavane* which incidentally still seems to me to be the *Green Table* of this company.

NEW ZEALAND — **KEITH WOODS**

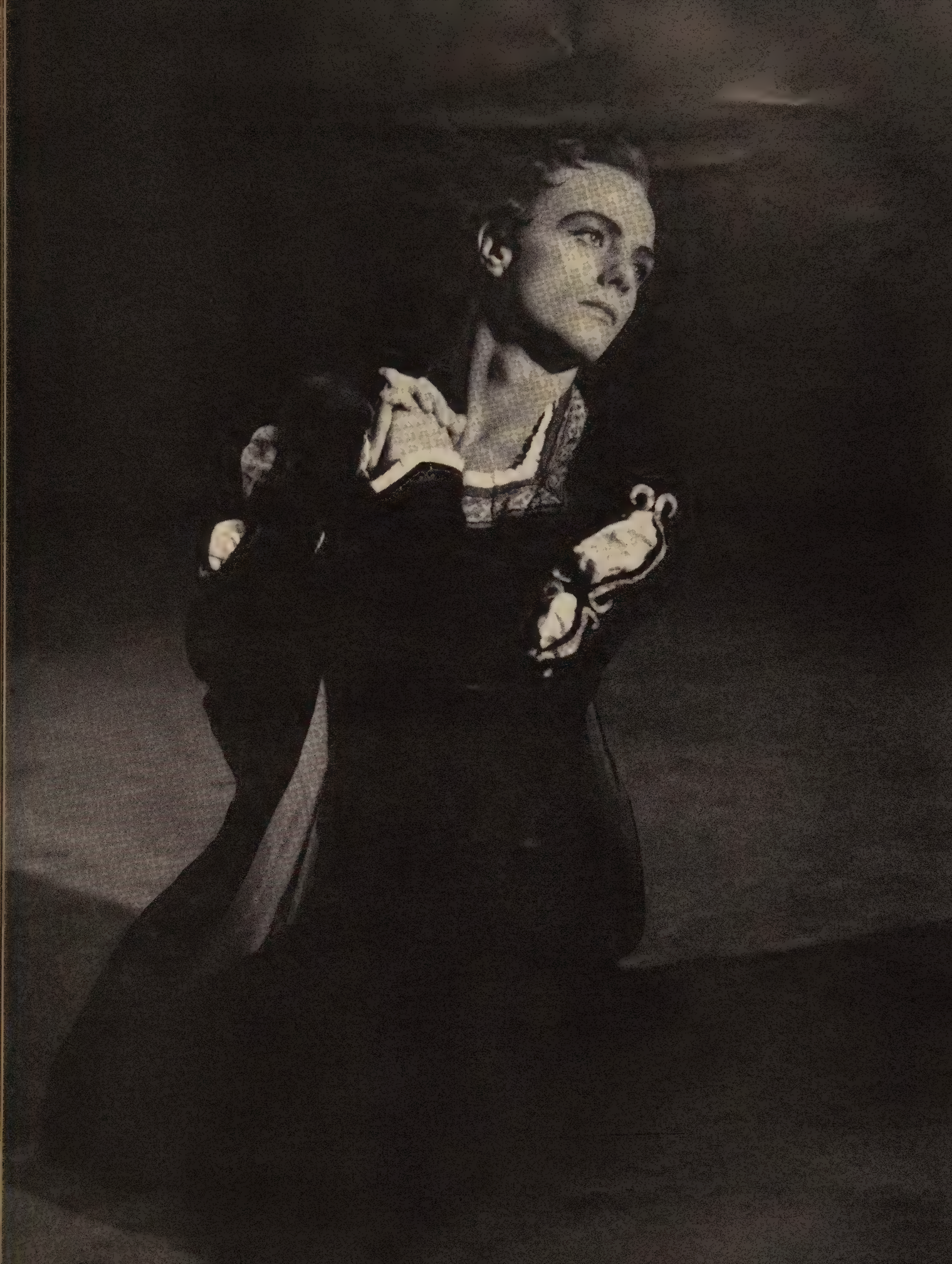
The main feature of dance in New Zealand, in recent months, has been the variety that has been offered to the public.

Following a very successful tour by the members of the Peking Opera Company, we have seen a small troupe of Indian dancers, headed by Shri. K. K. Shetty, and two Spanish dancers, Pepita Sarazena and José Luis Rodriguez. The latter made an extensive tour of the country and were followed by Katherine Dunham and company.

The triumphs which Miss Dunham has experienced elsewhere were repeated here, and she was acclaimed as a great artist by those who saw her. Unfortunately the general public did not throng to the theatres and, while reasonable houses were obtained in Auckland and Wellington, Christchurch was so bad that the remainder of the tour was cancelled. For some reason unknown to the writer, one of her works, *Rites of Passage,* received a hostile reception from some sections of the public and had to be withdrawn (while a Voodoo ritual went unchallenged). Miss Dunham's supporters however, and I am among them, believe that in all her works she has proved herself to be one of the greatest creative artists, and, certainly one of the greatest producers ever to be seen in this country.

Meanwhile however, classical ballet has not been neglected. The most popular event for some years has been a tour of New Zealand by Rowena Jackson, Bryan Ashbridge, Pearl Gaden and Derek Westlake. These four dancers appeared in selections from *Swan Lake, Coppelia, Les Sylphides,* etc., to packed houses and received great ovations throughout the country. Nor has the New Zealand Ballet Company been inactive, but for the last six months has been making a national tour. For some time doubt has been voiced as to the future of this company, but it has been announced that a new tour will commence early in 1958 and a small subsidy has been obtained from the Government. The programme will consist of the Danish version of *La Sylphide* (music by Lovenskjold) and Poul Gnatt's new ballet *Sentiments of Vienna.*

Opposite: John Gilpin in Giselle. — *Photo: Mike Davis*



JOHN

THIS versatile English artist has almost everything a male dancer needs—youth, a neat well-balanced figure, comely, small head, well-set and expressive; temperament, imagination, humour and a measure of natural dignity. In addition to all these good points, he has a very sound technical background and already a wide experience, plus ambition and the intelligence to know that there are still unlimited worlds to conquer. If he has one lack, it is perhaps a sort of sixth-sense in projecting himself, a quality most subtly blended of self-assurance and restraint, with perhaps a soupçon of arrogance and of superlatively stage-managed charm, a quality purely for stage use, and quite unconnected with the endearing boyishness of a man's character in private life. For, off-stage, John Gilpin is simplicity personified, utterly free from "leading man" airs.

Much of John Gilpin's success is due to the fact that he started training at a very early age. Born at Southsea in Hampshire, he became a once-a-week ballet pupil at the age of seven. This led to a scholarship with the Cone-Ripman Ballet School, and he spent the war years in that school's excellent boarding establishment in Rutland as a student evacuee, gaining the distinction of the Adeline Genée Gold Medal at the age of thirteen. Two years later, his studies ended, he had the good fortune to be drawn into the Ballet Rambert which, though it meant tremendously hard work for a boy not yet full-grown, proved immensely rewarding from the artistic point of view. He caught Madame Rambert's own enthusiasm, and there was no lack of opportunity for a young, promising boy in those days when good male dancers were still hard to come by. In five years he had the chance of sixteen solo parts, and also learnt to hold his own in the rough-and-tumble of touring life, savouring the reaction of many different types of audience. He accompanied the Ballet Rambert on its Australian tour, and, returning in 1949, spent the next year or so gaining totally different experience, in Roland Petit's happy and inspiring company. Six months' further continental work, this time with the Marquis de Cuevas' company, followed; then in 1950 came the most important turning-point in his career, when he joined Markova and Dolin in the newly-created Festival Ballet. He has remained with this company ever since, creating many new rôles for it.

Altogether he has travelled twice round the world. He is proud of the fact chance has permitted him to partner nearly all the great ballerinas of our day. In the course of his travels he has danced in Canada, the U.S.A., Australia, New Zealand, India, Spain, Portugal, France, Switzerland, Holland, Belgium and all the Scandinavian countries; also several South American states, and above all Israel, of which he has most happy memories. One of his favourite countries to dance in has been Spain, because the audiences there have shown boundless enthusiasm. He finds Scandinavian audiences also very warm in their appreciation, and the Danes, especially, are most knowledgeable about ballet.

For relaxation, he likes simple country life. He owns a little cottage in Devonshire, which is the Gilpin's ancestral county. Here, accompanied by his twin brother (who by the way is stage manager of London's Festival Ballet) he likes to potter around, doing domestic chores and odd spots of interior decorating, whenever he has the time. It is a totally bachelor establishment; John so far has escaped the shackles of matrimony! He is regarded as one of the most eligible bachelors in the ballet world.

His greatest ambition is to become still more proficient in his chosen profession. He is fully alive to the modern trend, and to the increasing importance of the male dancer in ballet; but while he has an immense admiration for the Russian method, he regards with some misgiving the tendency to place undue emphasis on pure acrobatics —feels that if this goes too far, the poetic side of ballet may eventually disappear. Russia, he says, can allow herself the luxury of experimenting because she has such vast resources both in the way of material and talent; she can, for instance, "let herself go" on almost cinematographic crowd scenes, in the interests of realism, by employing unlimited numbers of non-dancers who are expert character actors. Even our state-subsidised Royal Ballet is like a "poor relation" in this respect, and has to achieve its effects with much more limited means, while a non-subsidised, travelling company has to "fill the eye" with no more than 40 artists! Still, England is holding its own very well indeed, and John regards it as a matter for some congratulation that we are the only country that seems able to support two or three companies all the year round.

1939 to 1949

During the war period John Gilpin made an appearance in various branches of the entertainment world, taking in his stride a brief appearance in films, including *They were Sisters* and *The Years Between,* the part of Michael in Barrie's stage play *Peter Pan.* He also appeared on radio.

In 1944 he danced his first rôle "The Scotch Rhapsody." in Ashton's *Façade* at the Theatre Royal, Brighton.

Ballet Rambert

In 1945 he joined Ballet Rambert, with whom he danced the following roles:

Scotch Rhapsody, Popular Song in	*Façade* (Ashton)
Tyrolean Dance, Tarantella, Canzonetta in	*Soirée Musicale* (Tudor)
Mercury, Venus in	*Planets* (Tudor)
Mercury in	*The Descent of Hebe* (Tudor)
Red Cavalier in	*Gala Performance* (Tudor)
	Czernyana (Staff)
Rabbit Catcher in	*Sailor's Return* (Howard)
Jack Ketch in	*Mr. Punch* (Gore)
Lead in	*Simple Symphony* (Gore)
Peter, Cat, Huntsman in	..*Peter and the Wolf* (Staff)

Top left and centre: Two famous Sylphides:
Alicia Markova *Photo: Mike Davis*
Margot Fonteyn *Photo: Leon Ward*

GILPIN

and the classical roles danced included the following:
Blue Bird, *Le Spectre de la Rose*, Harlequin in *Carnaval*, Albrecht and the pas de deux Act 1 in *Giselle*, The Prince in *Swan Lake* and *The Nutcracker*, *Les Sylphides*, Franz in *Coppelia* and the Prince in *Aurora's Wedding*.

1949

Ballet de Paris de Roland Petit

Amongst the roles danced with this Company were:

The Bandit in	*Carmen* (Petit)
	Harlequinade (Volinine)
The Sailor in	*Adame Miroir* (Charrat)
The Dandy Beau in	*Le Beau Danube* (Massine)
Le Roi-Nougat in	*Le Rève de Léonor* (Ashton)

1950

With the Marquis de Cuevas

(Grand Ballet de Monte Carlo)
Design for Strings (Taras)
Concerto Barocco (Balanchine)
Black Swan
Perséphone (Taras)
1950 to 1957

Festival Ballet

Swan Lake (as the Prince)	*The Nutcracker*
Le Spectre de la Rose	*Vision of Marguerite* (as Faust)
Concerto Grosso	*The Black Swan*
Harlequinade	*Symphony for Fun*
Les Sylphides	*Napoli*
Alice in Wonderland (as the White Rabbit)	
Etudes	*Giselle* (as Albrecht)
Homage to a Princess	*Don Quixote*
La Esmeralda (as Pierre Gringoire, the poet)	
Vilia (as Danilo)	*Coppelia* (as Franz)
Capriccioso	*Variations for Four*
Le Beau Danube (as the Hussar)	*Symphony in C* (4th movement)
Graduation Ball (as the Drummer)	

Text by **ELISABETHE CORATHIEL**

Top right: Dianne Richards, Marilyn Burr, Diane Westerman and John Gilpin feeding the pigeons in the Piazza Castello Sforzesco during their visit to Milan.

John escorts Belinda Wright to a press conference held on Festival Ballet's return from its European tour in 1957.

Above: Gilbert Mayer
Photo: Studio Lipnitzki

Below: Dany Colletin
Photo: Studio Liseg

Above: Iovanka Biegovitch

Below: Marie Claire Carrié and Milko Sparemblek in Le Rideau Rouge. *Photo: Rouget*

Above: Marie Claire Carrié
Photo: Studio Liseg

Below: Claire Motte
Photo: Studio Lipnitzki

MEET OUR DANCERS

A SERIES BY WELL KNOWN WRITERS ON THE DANCE

FRANCE

BY

Jean Coquelle

IN the sphere of French choreographic art, I would like to present to the reader those who seem destined to become the great dancers perhaps even the top stars of French ballet. In a sense it is only those who truly deserve it who are likely to become stars—but this, alas, is not absolutely certain.

Claire Motte. A few years ago, in the corps de ballet examinations, with amazement we discovered a strange black pearl, a danseuse with long legs, no decadent mannerisms and one who allies the qualities of the Russian style with the most renowned charms of the French dance. If Claire Motte gives promise of the strong line and rubato of a Spessiva, she also shows signs of having the grace and elevation of a Taglioni. However, she has faults which can be attributed to her youth and on that count excused, namely shoulders constantly hunched and an empty expression which is only eclipsed by the charm of her dancing.

In short, she needs to find teachers who with all the treasures of the academic tradition and experience know how to help her exceptional gifts to flourish. If she succeeds in finding these teachers, who are after all to hand, the Opéra should have another great ballerina.

Iovanka Biegovitch is not French but Yugoslav. We want so much to keep her in France that in order to attach her all the more, I cannot resist the temptation of mentioning her in this review.

She was a star at the Opera in Belgrade when Jean Babilée brought her over to become with Claire Sombert, the ballerine of his company.

In her native land, she played with success Odette in *Lac des Cygnes* and Juliette in *Romeo et Juliette*. These two rôles point clearly to the type of danseuse that Iovanka Biegovitch is.

She is not a technician. She confronts with terror those cursed pirouettes that some wretch has put there in order to torture the dance world. Iovanka Biegovitch is one of the most lyrical danseuses of the new generation.

She had an uncertain beginning with the Jean Babilée company due to a strange piece of programme planning which made her dance *La Mort du Cygne* in the midst of purely modern ballets. Her fine interpretation of *Sables* was not sufficient to make one forget the discomfort that this badly conceived ballet created. It was very intelligently danced but it had no place in such a spectacle.

To sum up, we have not really seen Iovanka Biegovitch displaying those musical and lyrical qualities which she possesses other than in the studio. However, and this is for me an undeniable proof—Margot Fonteyn with her customary insight was able to discern the pure talent of this danseuse who is still waiting to show Paris what she really is—a lyrical ballerina.

Marie-Claire Carrié is a danseuse who has arrived at a cross-road. She is still at an age when her whole future is to be decided and everything contrives to hamper her.

At the moment, Marie-Claire Carrié is a danseuse short of stature, fighting, and in part overcoming, the tendencies of a terre à terre danseuse. She is lively and has great speed. She has a gay disposition but that mischievous gaiety is disturbed by a growing maturity which makes her look for rôles of a more serious kind than those which have already been entrusted to her. Her early performances, apart from an excursion into a classical style (crowned with greater success than she received later) were only the gesticulations and grimaces of a child-danseuse who thinks that because she has a sure technique she can play with it. That phase passed and she found herself left with her sure technique and some faults besides. She has applied herself since to discovering in herself the deep and great qualities of a classical dancer which were overshadowed in this "crisis of youth." Twenty years of age, Marie-Claire Carrié is in many ways a fascinating personality; she would dance now a very graceful *Coppelia* and will assuredly become a classical dancer of the Nadia Nerina type.

Generous nature has endowed her richly and such a richness of possibilities does not come one's way without making one a little over-excited; but Marie-Claire Carrié has quickly regained control and works like a student conscientiously and seriously, forgetting that she had begun to enjoy the glory of stardom. Her ardent desire to learn and to perfect her art are her greatest assets.

Tessa Beaumont is the most exuberant danseuse of her generation. She is older than Marie-Claire Carrié and also more mature physically and intellectually but she none the less considers the dance as a great adventure. Her beauty and her athleticism make her outstanding although she does not possess the classical perfection of line and technique, a perfection which she was never taught and which has always been a fault in her development. She is a danseuse of the Ludmila Tcherina type.

Her first real role was *La Belle au Boa* an amusing piece by Maurice Béjart and since that time she has followed a path which agrees perfectly with her nature and training; *Les Belles Damnées* with Roland Petit, then *L'Echelle* with the Ballet 56 where she showed signs of an expressive talent, as melodramatic as one could wish. She saved with her performance a ballet the choreography of which would have left one indifferent.

Tessa Beaumont has "flirted" a little with the classical repertoire and if the pas-de-deux from *Don Quichotte* showed off her seductive beauty, the pas-de-deux and the waltz from *Les Sylphides* seemed when she danced them, like a parody of a Fokine masterpiece as interpreted by Beatrice Lillie. An involuntary parody of course . . .

Milko Sparemblek. Here is another Yugoslav dancer whom France would be happy to adopt. His appearance is typical of his race and his working technique has an ease and calm rarely found. His pure virile lines have in the saut as well as à terre that same vigour and beauty which make up his charm with the exception of his hands which are unfortunately clenched and alone betray the effort involved.

Milko Sparemblek's elevation is not a strong point and his pirouettes lack assurance. However, apart from these two weak spots the impression of strength and serenity which he gives to the classical repertoire and the warmth of his interpretation class him in the front rank of male dancers.

He needs above all to free himself from the numerous complexes which still inhibit him and from a tendency to misunderstand certain styles especially that of Fokine. His desire to extend his knowledge and his determination to overcome his faults will no doubt win the day.

Gilbert Mayer is without doubt the most promising figure at the Paris Opéra. He allies courage and integrity in his work with a definite talent. What was serious—or rather what has been serious in the case of Gilbert Mayer, was that he received a negligent and purely athletic training such as is still only too often given at the Opéra.

Gifted with a fine elevation, with a dazzling ease in the pirouettes, a remarkable batterie . . . and with a willingness for all tests, Gilbert Mayer lacks despite all this the ability to communicate great emotions to the audience. His very real talent is not at fault but the trouble lies with his first teachers. This young man is at his best when dancing naturally. A smooth, harmonious body, the face of a romantic prince, are of great use to him. Since the last examinations at the Opéra, it has been possible to detect great changes showing themselves in his manner of dancing. Under the influence of a new teacher, he is seeking in himself a deeper nature. If he continues, we will soon have at the Opéra a star dancer of fine style with virile noble lyricism. A real dancer.

Musicality, port de bras, line . . . and make-up, all the secret is there. A secret very easy for a dancer of this class to discover.

Conclusion

Here I am at the end of an article which perhaps will be considered as a little unkind to those who figure in it. In my opinion, they are the best dancers of the new generation and as such I have tried to sort out for them certain confused difficulties which perhaps they are unable to see clearly for themselves. I do this without denying the deep pleasure that I have in seeing the dancing of Claire Motte, Tessa Beaumont, Marie-Claire Carrié, Iovanka Biegovitch, Gilbert Mayer and Milko Sparemblek. Their problems make them still more interesting to me and I could wish that these criticisms might be a ready homage to their talent.

However, it is as well to point out that I have not made an exhaustive study of the danseurs and danseuses of promise. In the finest studios in Paris other hopes no less promising are coming to light such as Dany Colletin, a pupil of Andelka Illitch, who is reaching maturity, Olga Kostromine engaged by Massine to dance in *Les Sylphides* in Sweden, Nicole Crucciani already a young star, Josette Vauchelle, a grand sujet at the Opéra, the very young Michele d'Estrée, and that boy of seventeen, Guy Leonard, who will be, no doubt, a magnificent classical dancer.

JEAN COQUELLE.

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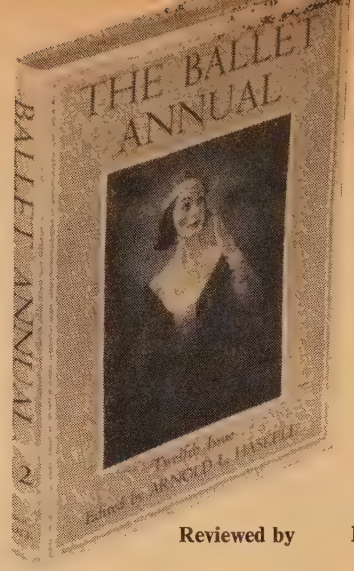

New Books

Reviewed by PIGEON CROWLE

The Ballet Annual. Ed. Arnold Haskell. (*Black*, 25*s.*).

As I write the year has drawn to a close and here is Ballet Annual once again, well up to standard and with a decidedly Russian flavour. This is to remind us that only a little over twelve months ago we were experiencing the glories of the Bolshoi Ballet and the wonder that is Ulanova. Besides a detailed account, well illustrated, of the Bolshoi season at Covent Garden, there is a tribute by Arnold Haskell to the great ballerina as an artist and a person that is the truest and certainly the most perceptive of any I have read; there is Mary Clarke's visit to Paris to see the much-discussed Stanislavsky Ballet; and Mary Skeaping's fifteen days in Leningrad and Moscow, spent almost entirely in the theatre and with artists of the theatre, and seen through the eyes of a dancer, teacher, and ballet mistress; while Yuri Slominsky, Moscow teacher and writer, airs the problems and aspirations of contemporary ballet.

There are, of course, the usual features, and there are three articles to set you arguing. They ask whether the art of the choreographer is in danger; whether the standard of decor is deteriorating; and whether our dancers lack heart. What do you think?

Rhythm in the Heavens. By Ram Gopal (*Secker & Warburg*, 25*s.*).

When Ram Gopal's father once asked him why he danced, he replied, "I love to move, to leap, to float . . . to let the spirit seize me at the sound of drums or music. You call it dancing, father, I call it rhythm." That would be the fundamental of the answer given by most Western dancers, but very few would give much thought to the source of that rhythm. For Ram Gopal the source is Life itself, the Divine Energy, and his art, therefore, a holy gift to be used with much reverence.

That is the essence of a book containing many great and hidden truths, not for any particular creed or nationality, but for the refreshment and inspiration of all who seek. This does not mean that religious and philosophical tenets are weightily propounded, but they are, inevitably, bound up with the whole autobiography. The style is easy, and sometimes inclined to be chatty, as Gopal tells his story which begins with a small boy dancing in a garden in Bangalore and develops into the world-wide tours of the greatest dancer the East has given us. There are the long student years; the tensions, demands, and successes as the four great styles of Indian dancing are translated for the modern theatre; and we meet personalities as diverse as those of Gandhi, Nijinsky, and Queen Mary.

It is sad that, in spite of all the triumphs, full houses could still mean an empty bank account if a certain standard was to be maintained, and that Ram Gopal has been forced to turn to the cinema. I found this book, with its wisdom and perception, a refreshing change from the usual balletic biography, and sincerely hope the author will give us the second one he has in mind, and that the Hindu Ballet, phoenix-like, will rise again.

Come Dance With Me. By Ninette de Valois (*Hamish Hamilton*, 35*s.*).

Here is the story of an Irish jig which began on the banks of the Liffey and ended on Covent Garden stage. If less spectacular and explosive than Diaghilev's Russian gopak, its lively and persistent rhythm has resulted in one of the greatest achievements in the history of ballet.

The journey is an absorbing one, giving us many fascinating glimpses of Mrs. Wordsworth's Dancing Academy, The Wonder Children—"I think I can boast of having danced on every old pier theatre in England"—the Diaghilev period, the Abbey Theatre days, and the Bloomsbury Group; and then there is the amazing story of the creation in twenty years and a world war of our National Ballet.

Yet once past the nostalgic memories of childhood, I found it, like Grigoriev's *Diaghilev Ballet*, a tantalising book. For it is a chronicle of endeavours and events, of difficulties and triumphs, and the people who were part of it all, but the thoughts, the feelings, the impulses that lay behind them and were the living force, are shadowy and elusive. Curiously enough, it is the incidents not connected with ballet, such as the vivid description of the Company's escape from Holland, that really come alive. And yet, perhaps, this is not so strange because in the whole astonishing success story there was only one impulse that really mattered to the author, it has made this book possible and is, in the end, all that matters to us.

The illustrations are excellent and those concerned with balletic personalities are mostly off-stage. "No Swans" was the request when some dancers were asked for photographs, and the result is a charming page of ballerinas and their babies. I was not surprised to learn that royalties from this book will go to the Royal Ballet School.

Variation of the Sugar Plum Fairy. (*Dance Bureau, Inc., New York.* $1.50).

This is the famous variation from *Casse Noisette* as danced by Alicia Markova. It is set down in Labanotation by Ann Hutchinson, and has a comment by the ballerina.

Six Great Dancers. By Mary Clarke. (*Hamish Hamilton*, 10*s.* 6*d.*)

I am sure this book will be a successful addition to the book shelf of any child interested in ballet, for it is a series of essays dealing, with the careers of six famous dancers—Marie Taglioni, Anna Pavlova, Vaslav Nijinsky, Tamara Karsavina and Margot Fonteyn. All "learned their five positions as children and all worked single-mindedly to perfect their art from their first lessons to the end of their careers." Nothing adds more to an appreciation and understanding of the art of ballet than a knowledge of those who have helped to make its history—these six are among the greatest and their stories are of absorbing interest. With six illustrations.

Mike Davis Looks at London's Festival Ballet. Ed. A. George Hall. (*C.P. Enterprises*, 7*s.* 6*d.*)

The work of Mike Davis is well known to our readers and this collection of photographs has all his usual flair for the essential moment, for composition, and for capturing the atmosphere of the ballet. In nearly one hundred and fifty pictures he shows the dancers in performance, rehearsal or backstage, so that one feels one has really seen the company in all its aspects. No one seems left out from corps de ballet to ballerina, from stage-hand to director, or the many guest artists who have joined them from time to time. It is rather astonishing that all this should be the work of someone who has made it his hobby and who is not a professional photographer.

The text includes a description of the work of Festival Ballet and a message from Anton Dolin. Excellently printed, this large slim book is an attractive souvenir of a very popular company.

Mime. By Joan Lawson. (*Pitman*, 42*s.*)

When the Prince in *Swan Lake* first glimpses Odette and, turning to the audience, draws his hand in a curve around his face, not everyone may realise that, in the traditional mime and endearing manner of the old classical ballets, he is saying that she is beautiful. Certainly, very few would know that the source of this gesture is to be found in the sign language used by the great religious Orders to preserve their rules of silence. This is one of the many interesting things to be learnt from a most scholarly and fascinating book written by an expert on the subject.

Though it is essentially for the specialist, for students of the art of mime as an addition to the words of the actor, as an integral part of the ballet, and as an assistance in period mime, I think that anyone who wants to make a serious study of ballet, or wishes to understand the art as thoroughly as possible, should have this book.

The first half deals exhaustively with the theory and practice of mime, the second is a briefer historical survey with special reference to English mime-play and the Harlequin-play of Denmark.

The many drawings by Peter Revitt are a delight and portray characters and moments that are familiar and easily recognised. The mime for Age, by example, is taken from the first act of *Coppélia* when Swanilda describes the old toymaker. I have always admired the clarity and accuracy of this artist's drawings with their great understanding of the dancer's body and actions. His male dancers are excellent, strong and virile, but I do wish the girls were not quite so strapping or their chins so square!

Fonteyn: A Study of the Ballerina in her setting. By James Monahan. (*A. & C. Black*, 18*s.*)

Fonteyn is a name that fills the largest theatres all over the world but this is not a "fan" book written to attract her admirers. It is a thoughtful and serious study, often delicately shaded and conscientiously detailed, but unfortunately lacking real depth and life. The ephemeral art of a great ballerina has an intangible quality, in spite of its firm physical basis, for it is illumined by the soul of the artist and coloured by the nuances of her personality, and any attempt

Continued on page 18

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ALL the Arts are revealed by three elements. As in the art of words we have the Speaker, his Speaking, and his Speech—or in music the Musician, his playing of music, and the composition he plays, so in every ballet, of West or East—we find the Dancer, the Dancing, and the Dance. Always present, these three elements are factually not separable, yet mentally we must consider each phase in its own values.

Dancing is unavoidably different—even with the same Dance and the same Dancer, at each successive performance. Genuine works of art cannot be repeated with mechanical accuracy; thus it is futile to seek identical repetition. Adherence to theme preserves the norm better than precision in craft of movement. Though dancing always changes, the dancer should forever seek perfection based on fine technique. This search is the first reason for academic training in classical dance, for upon its craft revolves the acquisition of acceptable theatre style. Each school has its own ideal: that which is considered "looks best" on the stage—not in the classroom. Optimum style thus changes from one city to another; certainly from time to time; yet tradition is greater than style, as style is better than fashion and good fashion better than mere novelty—but all phases can be used.

Teacher, dancer, and producer or director, must work together, with the material they have, to present the selected theme, integrated to meet current conventions. They must see a spectacle "in their own language" while the dancer must possess certain qualities of natural form and dynamism, enhanced by careful training; finally clarified in masterly production.

The natural dancer must then be:—

1. *Choric:* that is: related to partner and to stage group (as in every ballet) related to stage space, to stage tempo (and the sense of "theatre time") and related to the stage scene (by character and costume).
2. *Musical:* that is: related in position and movement (by musical rhythm) to the musical structure, in dramatic agreement or opposition; in rhythm derived from tempo and beat, enhanced by speed, direction, or stillness.
3. *Decorative:* that is: related by personal body line (and body mass) by character, costume and make-up—related in dramatically assumed character to theme of ballet and in consonance with all other dancers present; related under light and in colour to these dancers (and the set) in action or repose.

These three phases serve to express the dance through the dancing of this one dancer, as joined with others in the essential group that provides the foundation in ballet. The same qualities are necessary in solo dance; while no less is necessary in Modern Dance. The status of the dancer alters the initial focus of presentation; with it, the audience varies in expectancy.

A dancer may be (*a*) professional or (*b*) amateur; a (*c*) folk-dancer, or (*d*) educationally exercising. Dancing "for charity" is on the borderline between amateur or professional status, not a difference in skill; while folk-dancing not performed professionally may be copied in theatre style for stage use by professional dancers.

In too many ballets, the flaws and failures arise from inadequate direction. Dancers are so much better than directors; who are too frequently too close to their work to 'see it whole." The European dancer learns ballet technology almost entirely by academic class exercises, which have had original meaning sapped from them, except as facility in stylised movement. Such dancers rarely avoid the fault of bringing class exercises onto the stage, undigested; often unmastered; and even approved by our inexperienced choreographers who offer mere eccentricity instead of meaning. We find personal rhythm and group rhythm absent: the dancer is present as one of a set of students, not in a group of integrated dancers governed by theme and its dramatic rhythms ruled by good music. Hence in rehearsal, there is too much arithmetic and not enough real rhythm.

Our dancer rarely learns much about choreography in early years; it is hard—in ruling circumstances—to understand precisely what choreography is "all about" until one is able to perform reasonably well the technical movements explained with their meanings in relation to their original purpose. This is like learning words aurally with no grasp of their association with things and actions.

Still less does the young dancer come rapidly to sense that most important factor of rhythm—the ruler in all human arts and the universal power in the formative energies of nature. Many grown dancers fail to show rhythm; as too many of our modern composers lack that power in their "music." Without true rhythm, there is no true art. Rhythm can be learned; and is learned more rapidly by association with real artists than by verbal explanation.

Folk-dancers learn by visual imitation, ruled by simple musical form. They begin young; learn the drift of the play, follow experienced dancers. Oriental dancers start very young, learning movement and pose by sheer imitation from an older dancer, just like learning pothooks in writing, without much idea of what they may mean Many Oriental dancers obviously never do learn precisely what *hasta* and *mudra* do mean, in reality or in symbol.

Notable in the training of folk-dancers, compared with professional theatre dancers, is the "festival season" versus the "repertory system." Modern commercial theatre demands a life offering forty weeks playing each year; not fourteen days of the annual festival. In town Theatre we have usually more performances than rehearsal (except in Russia) but in country folk dance, there is more rehearsal than performance. The educational dance rarely shows anything but continual practice in movement. The immense value of a professional company is in its (1) own theatre, (2) its regular productions, (3) its permanent members.

Some ballet-trained dancers claim to be able to perform any kind of dance at short notice. This is an illusion, more specially in the highly important character aspects of mime and gesture. Too much ballet mime is meaningless; while gesture lacks controlled rhythm, either in power or delicacy.

Conventions are necessary for all dancers; they must meet the currently understood conventions held by the audience; in dance as in speech. In sequence we have tradition; academic or customary style; fashion; and lastly, novelty, by way of quip or comment. Reversal of these successive values is dangerous, while skilful usage contributes to the realism that must underlay even the most delicate fantasy of ballet.

BOOKS (*Continued from page* 17)

at capturing its essence in a full-length book is fraught with difficulties and dangers. Not only does it require a deep insight and a sensitive understanding of all that goes to make that very simple yet, paradoxically, complex creature, the artist of genius, it must create for the reader a picture that evokes the artist, one that speaks to the mind and moves the heart, so that posterity may safely read and say, "That was indeed, a great dancer!"

In his efforts to be candidly critical yet tortuously tactful, Mr. Monahan has been caught on the horns of a dilemma, and the effect is sometimes faintly embarrassing. Also, I find the belabouring of personal trivialities, such as whether Fonteyn is obstinate or not because she does not accept the advice of influential friends with regard to her roles, unworthy of a study of this kind. Even if it does lead, eventually, to the conclusion that she is serene.

The latter part of the book, which deals with the ballets, company, and ballet aesthetics generally, is much happier. Despite the uneasy style, too encumbered with clauses and qualifications, there are few jarring notes, and all is stimulating and informative.

There is no doubting the writer's knowledge of ballet, his sincerity and feeling for his subject, and I had hoped that in the summing up a spark would be struck to give us at least something of Fonteyn's magic, of the essence of her greatness, but only a rather negative figure emerges and, as the writer says himself, it will not do. It is all rather like a portrait painted by James Gunn as opposed to one by Augustus John.

Ballet 7. *By Serge Lido.* (*A. & C. Black*, 42*s.*)

Youth comes into its own in this collection of photographs by Lido, and judging by the appearance of the students from four great academies, the future of ballet is in good hands. In England a very likely-looking class of boys is one of a number of pictures taken in the elegant eighteenth century surroundings of White Lodge, Richmond Park, the home of the Royal Ballet School; charming dark-eyed sprites decorate the pages devoted to the Scala, Milan; in Moscow, Ulanova smiles at a group of perspiring Bolshoi students resting during a break; and in the famous classroom in the dome of the Paris Opéra, the great tradition is carried on.

There are also the usual imaginatively taken and beautifully reproduced selection of the art of leading dancers and companies, classical and national. One of my favourites this year is the shot of Chauviré in her *Nautéos* costume, cast up by foaming seas on the marble-veined rocks of the Mediterranean.

But who made the English translation of some portions of the French text? And who read the proofs?

Correction: Last month we stated that the price of Lorna Hill's book *The Little Dancer* was 12s. 6d. This is now published at 8s. 6d.

Ballerina in China

Extracts from the diary of

ANN HORN

Prima Ballerina of the Ballet Rambert

"Her feet move like flowing clouds
A drop of water gliding over glass."

Extract from Review of Ann Horn's performance in Giselle

from the Hsin Wen Daily, Shanghai.

WE left London for our tour of China on the 5th September. Our journey was to take us first to Brussels, then on to Prague and Moscow. A jet plane was to have been at Prague to take us through to Moscow, but when we arrived we were told it had gone to America instead! The plane could only take 24, which meant leaving four members of the Company behind for later transportation.

It is a fascinating experience flying by night, it is dark down below yet there is light in the sky. The lights of Moscow gleamed like a fairy city below us.

On arrival at Peking we were greeted by students from the Chinese Folk Dance Ensemble, and, to Madame Rambert's surprise, by one of her old pupils, Tai-ai-lien, who is now Director of the Chinese National School of Ballet. They greeted us with flowers and ushered us into a bus, each one of us taken in hand by a student.

This, my first glimpse of China is a fascinating one.

The children are adorable; rickshaw bicycles swarm through the streets, many of them carrying a red flag, people are sleeping in the shade of the trees, as we smile at people they smile back at us.

I had tea in my room and went down to the theatre at 7.30. The Bridge of Heaven Theatre is new and seats about 1,500 people. It stands in the middle of what appears to be the old shopping centre.

When I went down to an English breakfast the next morning I found that the Company had exhausted the hotel's entire stock of postcards. I did my bar (exercises) in the morning and rehearsal started at 3.30 finishing at 7. It was very nerve wracking, we had an audience of students and people from the National Opera Company. The stage is much larger than it looked at first glance, and I am beginning to feel feverish and sick. In the evening we had a banquet. Tomorrow is opening night.

10th September

This has been the most exciting and nerve-wracking night I have ever had. We rehearsed at 11 this morning and then went over to watch the boys' class of the Classical Theatre. I was amused to see the spectators laugh when one student fell over on a difficult finish. I was then taken on a bus ride around the north and west of the town, where there are many new universities, even one for the students of the cinema. They are still erecting more. Children start school at seven years of age, go to primary school until they are 12, and on to an intermediate school until 17, then live in college for five years. It was quite a rush to get back for the performance and I was terribly nervous. After our performance of *Giselle* I had to go on again, and once more the young students ran on with flowers for everybody. We were then led through to a room where we were introduced to Chen-Yi, deputy Premier, the Reuter correspondent, and many other people. Chen-Yi was very nice to me and I was to find out afterwards that he does genuinely love the arts. I was pleased that he liked my Giselle.

Madame made a speech, saying that having seen the Classical Theatre in London in 1955 we were naturally very nervous to dance before them, but that the Company was very proud to be in China. Then Madame, myself, Pat and John spoke on the radio. After being congratulated on our performance I was asked if I had any comment to make on the theatre and the orchestra, I complimented them on both. John said how pleased he was that people seemed to understand the subtle humour in *Gala Performance*, which was not always fully appreciated in other countries. After the broadcast Peking Radio gave us each a present—Madame two silk cushion covers, a fan and two embroidered handkerchiefs, Pat and I each received two handkerchiefs and a fan, John two cushion covers. Such a nice gesture. I don't know how I am going to get through it all again tomorrow.

11th September

I did a bar, then rehearsal. There is a lovely cool room between the rehearsal room and the stage, with settees, armchairs, and tables where one can have China tea, fruit and cigarettes—green tea, the red is for export.

I should really have rested this afternoon, but the others were going shopping and I couldn't miss anything.

We had asked our interpreter to write down the names of some of the shops, but on-one could read them. However we had only gone a few yards when a pedlar caught up with us and said "good afternoon, ladies." We went into a shop like Selfridges, I am sure people cannot afford to buy these things. One dinner service, beautifully painted, cost about £40 in English money. Some of the goods were cheap and Western looking, some of the books had Russian pictures. I am afraid I caused a little misunderstanding because I asked a match seller to write down the value of one of my notes in my change. He thought I was doubting his honesty.

The nicest way of travelling is by pedi-car, they go so slowly you can see everything, and we had been out on this particular day for about one and a half hours, it cost us 1.50 yen (about 4s. 3d.).

I was just as nervous tonight, and was nearly sick before the second act, with a dry cough in the throat, but Madame said she liked my Giselle. She had been out front and told us that on top of the curtain it says in great gold letters in English and Chinese "Welcome British Ballet Rambert." I had some press photographs taken and then I went to my dressing room—and *was* sick.

During the evening Madame had met a woman who had studied with Isadora Duncan. She was asked what she did now and replied "I am too old." "How old," asked Madame. "Nearly seventy," came the reply. "Oh, only *seventy*," said Madame, "*I am nearly that*" and danced gaily down the corridor.

Sketches by Ann Horn.

Photo. by John Chesworth: At the Temple of Heaven, Peking.

Playing Chess.
"People do everything in the street."

They took me home and arranged for me to have a meal in my room, and every dish was brought to me as served to the others, but I couldn't eat anything.

12th September

Madame rehearsed me in *Gala Performance*, I was so tired and breathless I did it very badly. Madame decided to give me the night off, and it was arranged that I should go to the Opera, with Liang. We left the car and walked through some archways and gardens to the theatre. People fidget, cough, clap, chatter, and join in with it all. My interpreter couldn't understand a word because it was in dialect, they had sold out of synopses, but I had seen a film in London of two of the items on the programme so I knew the story better than he did!

13th September

Coppelia all morning, then we went to the Temple of Heaven. The gardens were full of tents with soldiers camping under the trees, rehearsing for National Day, they looked just as fed up as our English soldiers can look sometimes. They couldn't keep still or "eyes front." We pretended to do the slow guards' walk, and everyone laughed. They wouldn't let us take pictures of them because they were "not at their best," but on National Day, they promised, we could. I found myself looking at people more than buildings, they fascinate me.

The soldiers had their final run-through; such nice young faces—I hope we never have to fight them.

In the evening I saw the Peking Opera, not an overlarge theatre. Arches formed an outside wall, each archway was curtained, and the top was open to the sky. The characters were so good, the Innkeeper, the Matchmaker (they did have professional matchmakers once). I enjoyed it very much and everyone around me was so anxious that I should enjoy and understand it. Mr. Tu-nan said a great number of the audience were working class people.

14th September

Heard from Richard (her husband) to-day, he sounds miserable. *Coppelia* dress rehearsal lasted till about 2.30.

We went out to get a pedi-car and tried to get the same man who had taken us out the first day, they had seemed so upset when we didn't take them last time. It nearly caused a fight because you are supposed to take the first in the queue, and one man cycled furiously after Jane shouting at her man, apparently he won his argument because Jane had to get out and change cars while we waited.

Gill, Patty, Ian and David Ellenberg broadcast tonight. Ian told them (in terrible English) how he loved to dance . . . the first time he had done the rôle . . . first time danced in China . . . they couldn't stop him.

Sunday, 15th September

To-day we went to Embroidery Street. We had the whole shop out. The kimonos were all so beautiful, I have bought Richard (her husband) a beauty, but he won't like it!

We went to the Temple of Heaven to take some pictures of *Giselle*, Act II, between performances. We collected an enormous crowd, they came very close trying to touch my dress, and we were told that, as many people in the park had been unable to buy seats, they regarded this glimpse as a sort of private viewing and would talk about it for days.

We had a private dress parade that night in our kimonos we had purchased, and John took a chopstick photograph at supper.

Tonight there was a terrible din. The room boy came rushing down the corridor banging his ears. We went out to see what was happening and were just in time to see the last of a number of tanks coming in for National Day. The noise was fantastic as the tanks came from each side of the pagoda gate, crossed the square and joined up. I had never seen a big tank before and it was rather frightening to see the men's set faces, probably the effect was enhanced by the helmets they wore. I was amazed to see the pedi-cars shooting out in front of the tanks. I have seen them shoot out their passengers in front of trams, coaches and cars, but I thought tanks a bit too much by way of competition!

18th September

People do *everything* in the street, cook, play chess, sleep, sell, work. I even passed men making coal balls in the street. People are getting ready for National Day, and I noticed youngsters (aged between 11-20) wearing red scarves, they seem to have a "dedicated" expression. About 15 lorry loads of children of about 12-15 years of age arrived carrying flags, all so organised and smiling.

I had my first Chinese fan letter to-day.

Coppelia is not as popular as *Giselle*, it seems to me that they think it is a little childish, and they want more dramatic ballet. They are really very knowledgeable here having seen the Russian companies.

To-day I went to the Jade Market, and after buying a few souvenirs I took a film of the street scene with men peddling big bundles of wood and flax. The man who served me knew we were the English ballet company, and pointed out all the most interesting things.

20th September

I went to the Forbidden City this morning. It took ten years to collect the material for building and only three years to build with half a million men working on it. This is a fabulous place, and I like particularly all the colours which remain as they were. At the Summer Palace there have been renovations with lovely greens and blues, but when you see the originals you realise these newer colours are not as good. It was so hot we did not visit the banqueting room, and in all probability saw only a quarter of its treasures.

Tomorrow we leave for Tientsin.

ED. NOTE. Ann Horn's diary of this tour was a very comprehensive record. It is only possible within these pages to give a condensed version. Extracts have therefore been confined to those events considered to be of general interest to readers of this magazine.

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New Recordings

Reviewed by BEDFORD CROWLE

PETROUCHKA

Since its inclusion in the repertoire of the Royal Ballet, *Petrouchka* has become of increased interest to the gramophone companies. Four veteran ballet conductors are at the helm of the most recent issues. All the versions are good but Monteux on RCA. RB16047, which includes a good *Firebird* suite, seems to get less out of the score than the other three, whose performances vie with each other for first place. Dorati on Mercury MRL2523 gives an astounding performance but its apparent eclipse of the remaining two is partly due to the clear and brilliant type of recording. Unfortunately this develops into a hard and strident shrillness in the tutti, which I found most trying. A great pity.

Decca LXT5375, is a re-cut of that very fine and deservedly popular performance by Ansermet on the old LXT2502 and technically is much improved, except that from the Valse in the Blackamoor's cell to the end of the scene, a curtain veils the orchestra. This is a defect which, in my opinion, helps Kurtz, HMV. ALP1503, to a fair extent to win on points. He does not bring out the nuances in the score of the first tableau to the same degree as Ansermet but from there onward is second to none. The cover has Benois' beautiful drop in full colour.

SCHUBERT'S TRIO

To create a ballet to such glorious music as the *Trio in B Flat, Op.* 99, must have been an inspiring experience for Walter Camryn as he worked on his ballet, *Schubert's Trio*, last spring. This month we have that great musician, Casals, in two recordings, both of which can be recommended. On Philips ABR4059, by his sublime phrasing and subservience to the work, he has carried his two partners, Istomin (piano) and Schneider (violin), into his own realm, and has the advantage of a modern recording. On Columbia COLH12, he is with his famous and beloved friends, Cortot and Thibaud. It is of course a superlative performance and being a 12 inch disc, is coupled with Hadyn's attractive *Trio in G, Op.* 73/2. The recording is very old but nevertheless the transfer is remarkably successful. Your reactions to this may affect your choice.

LA BOUTIQUE FANTASQUE

What an enchanting Can-can Dancer Moira Shearer made in what was one of her best rôles and one of Massine's most successful ballets. For so long Ansermet's interpretation of this sparkling music has given us the most enjoyment, but now we have an utterly ravishing performance from Solti conducting the Israel P.O. on Decca LXT5341. The tenderness of the Nocturne and the gaiety of the Cakewalk will entrance you, and for good measure the *Sorcerer's Apprentice* is thrown in. The whole disc is excellently recorded and outstrips all competitors.

SONATA IN D

Phillipe Perrottet created his ballet, *Sonata in D*, for the City Ballet Society to the gay but gracious music of Mozart's Sonata, K576 and as you may well imagine, it receives a beautiful performance at the hands of Solomon, HMV. BLP1076. Thus, coupled with Haydn's Sonata No. 35 which has its own particular charm, it might entice you away from Gieseking on Columbia 33CX1345.

SCHUMANN CONCERTO

This is Nijinska's ballet for Ballet Theatre and it has one thing in common with Theilade's *Concerto* for the Royal Danish Ballet—Schumann's only piano concerto. Here we have it again with that splendid pianist, Frederick Gulda and the Vienna P.O. conducted by Andreae on Decca LXT5280 coupled with Weber's *Konzertstuck*. This is excellently played but the concerto lacks the smooth flow that is so essential, and therefore Gieseking remains top of my list.

Philips SBL5212 gives us a well recorded 12 inch disc of excerpts from *Swan Lake* by Kostelanetz and his orchestra and the performance is competent. His admirers will enjoy it but others should first hear Irving's on HMV. CLP1018. Mozart's *Piano Concerto in C minor* was used by Keith Lester during the war for his ballet, *Concerto*, at the Arts Theatre. Ralph Kirkpatrick, the well known American harpsichordist, somehow seems to miss the beauty of this great work, HMV. ALP1454, so I suggest you turn to Solomon on ALP1316. And finally, *Aurora's Wedding*, Decca LW5298, which takes one back to the days of the Russians, but here in spite of all Fistoulari's experience of ballet, it is inclined to be humdrum.

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Young Dancers

The delightful photograph on the right is of some of the eight- and nine-year-old pupils of Barbara Vernon and John Gregory's School of Russian Ballet in Chelsea, and shews them dancing a Serbian Dance in a recent performance. *Photo: Studio Cole.*

● ● ● ●

The Theatre Arts Ballet Society, founded by Miss Alicia Cottrell of St. Annes-on-Sea, Lancs, with the object of holding tests for children and students in solo dancing, including classical ballet and character or mime, held their first medal test in St. Annes on Friday, November 29th. As the Festival Ballet Company were playing in Manchester, Anton Dolin and John Gilpin were able to spend a day with the T.A.B.S. examining the candidates who were very thrilled to be so honoured on this their first session.

Miss Cottrell was awarded the Special Diploma, approved by Anton Dolin and certified by Alderman J. H. Dawson, J.P., Freeman of the Borough. This award is for teachers who have had their own school for 25 years, and are advanced members of a recognised Ballet Society.

A Festival of Ballet Competition is to be organised annually in St. Annes in the spring, and trophies will be presented by ballet celebrities. Medal Tests are only eligible to students who have passed their various grades or major examination with any recognised society.

● ● ● ●

The British Ballet Association have now established an examination centre at Leigh, Lancs. and 150 students from neighbouring towns were examined on the 1st December.

ENTERPRISING CLUB

During December Janet Cranmore's Ballet Club presented a new full length production of *The Nutcracker* at their theatre, The Edgbaston Ballet Theatre, Birmingham. This production came about as a result of planning and enterprise within this Club since its new theatre opened on the 4th April, 1957, when the Ballet Club simultaneously re-formed. A big step forward in such a short space of time, and probably this is the first full length performance of this ballet ever to be given by a Ballet Club.

THE NESTA BROOKING SCHOOL

Nesta Brooking is one of the world's outstanding ballet teachers, and the style and polish of her pupils are well known. What is less well known is that the pupils at her Hampstead ballet school receive a thorough training in acting from the distinguished producer Beryl Goddard; and the results of this work were visible in an outstanding production of the play *The Silver Curlew*, given at the studio on November 1st and 2nd. This reached a good professional standard, and was in fact well ahead of the R.A.D.A. production two years ago in attack, spontaneity and above all unity: every detail of acting and staging was co-ordinated to make the effect designed by the producer.

Though ballet training does not inevitably lead to clear-cut gestures and expressive bodily movement in drama—(it can in fact lead to affectation)—it certainly does so at the Brooking school: so much so that the play would have been intelligible even if the artists had been silent. (This is an ideal towards which all dramatic productions should aim, but it is rarely attained in the "legitimate" theatre.) Moreover, Beryl Goddard very sensibly increased the dance element to take advantage of the fact that she had a great deal of dancing talent at her disposal: the Silver Curlew itself was taken by a dancer on point (Susan Weldon) instead of being mimed, and the rough group dances at the end were replaced by a series of solos by fairies, in the manner of the last act of a three-act ballet: this strengthened the fantasy element in the play, and made it even more delightful than usual.

As was only to be expected, the famous child film-actress Mandy Miller (who is now working very hard at dancing) gave a splendid performance in the part of Charlie Loon, making a handsome and convincing fisherman with a rough country accent. But the standard of the others was so high that she did not stand out in solitary glory. Joanna Grant in particular, was superbly affected and bad-tempered as King Nollekens (with his fashionable split personality); Nicolas Chagrin (son of the composer Francis Chagrin) created an imp (Tom-Tit-Tot) which was eerily convincing in its inhuman contempt for the humans it pestered; and Ann Whitley was devastatingly effective as a buxom no-nonsense nanny.

The settings were quite astonishing in their stylized poetry, creating exactly the right fairy-tale atmosphere. I have seldom seen a small stage exploited so expertly and imaginatively.

FERNAU HALL

Photo below: The Silver Curlew. Left to right:

Gardener	*Susan Weldon*
Old Nan	*Ann Whitley*
Jen	*Francoise Willmott*
Cook	*Susan Salomon*
Dairymaid	*Claire Rutter*
Page	*Amanda Knott*

Photo: Jack Blake

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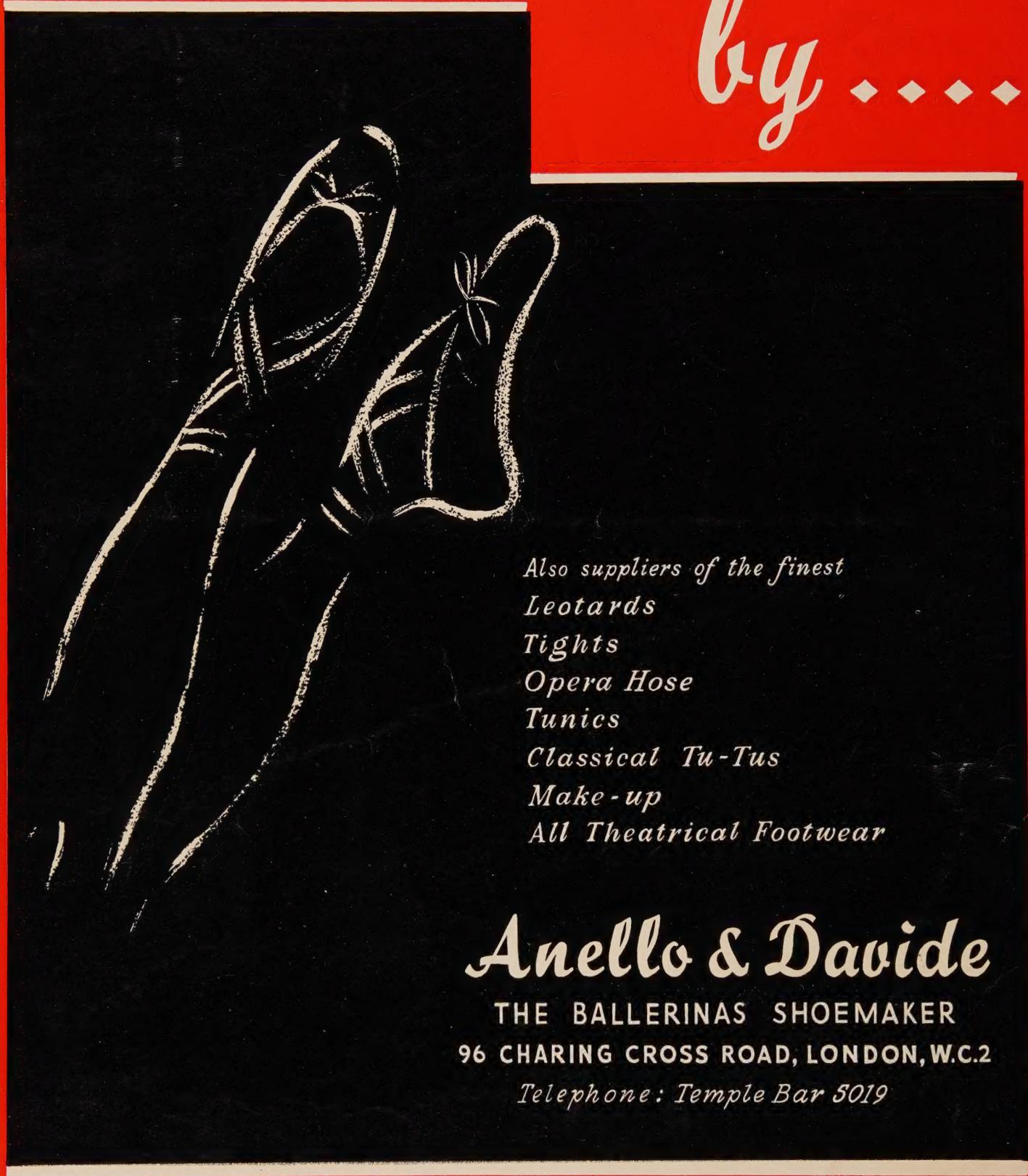

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